Rabauliman's appointment to CEC board withdrawn again. PAGE 2
'There should be straw poll in CNMI for US President, VP.' PAGE 3

Hafa Adai!

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Saipan Tribune

THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

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KIMBERLY B. ESMORES

Commonwealth Casino Commission executive director Andrew Yeom, following a hearing on Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC's emergency motion for a temporary restraining order, confirms that CCC will commence revocation proceedings at 10am today.

IPI's bid for TRO denied; CCC's proceedings a go

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The U.S. District Court for the NMI has denied Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC's motion for a temporary restraining order to prevent the Commonwealth Casino Commission from moving forward with revocation proceedings. With the court's decision, CCC is set to start revocation proceedings today that would essentially revoke the company's casino gaming license.

See IPI on Page 4

Cruz, Flores in heated discussion over casino matter

FERDIE DE LA TORRE

Commonwealth Casino Commission executive director Andrew Yeom provides a status update on the lawsuits filed by Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC against CCC and parties, ongoing settlement discussions, and revocation hearing, during a joint committee meeting by the Senate and the House of Representatives in the House chamber yesterday. Sen. Francisco Q. Cruz (R-Tinian) and Rep. Marissa Renee Flores (Ind-Saipan) engaged in a heated discussion at the meeting.

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

A joint committee meeting yesterday by the Senate and the House of Representatives that was supposed to hear updates from the Commonwealth Casino Commission was punctuated by a sharp exchange between Sen. Francisco Q. Cruz (R-Tinian) and Rep. Marissa Renee Flores (Ind-Saipan).

At the joint meeting by the

See JOINT on Page 4

Cruz, PSS reach settlement

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Public School System and Dr. Bobby Cruz, co-director of PSS' Mental Health Program at CNMI PSS, have agreed to settle the grievances that Cruz had filed where he alleged sexual harassment and rights violation.

Cruz

Cruz's attorney, Charity Hodson, and the PSS administration sent out a joint statement yesterday reporting that a settlement has been reached between the parties.

"Dr. Cruz's grievance has been settled. We acknowledge

See CRUZ on Page 4

Teo is named Tuvalu's new prime minister after elections that ousted Taiwan supporter

AP

Funafuti, the main island of the nation state of Tuvalu, is photographed on Oct. 13, 2011, from a Royal New Zealand Air Force C130 aircraft as it approaches the tiny South Pacific nation.

By ROD McGUIRK and TRISTAN LAVALETTE
Associated Press

MELBOURNE, Australia (AP)—Tuvalu's former

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INSIDE

LOCAL

Marianas High School held its 55th annual Cultural Day last Saturday Feb. 24, 2024, in a celebration that was also attended by 150 visiting students from the Seisa Gakuan School in Japan.

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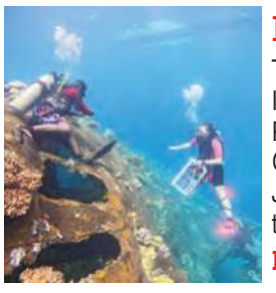

LOCAL

The remnants of World War II echo deep throughout the Pacific, and that's no truer than in Chuuk Lagoon, where dozens of Japanese military ships have met their watery graves.

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WORLD

The Palestinian Authority's prime minister announced his government's resignation on Monday.

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GOT A NEWS TIP? TEL: 235-6397 / 235-2440 FAX: 235-3740 EMAIL: editor@saipantribune.com

Local

Rabauliman's appointment to CEC board withdrawn again

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Citing time constraints, acting governor David M. Apatang has again withdrawn the appointment of Trinidad L. Rabauliman to serve as a member of the Commonwealth Election Commission.

Apatang informed Senate President Edith E. DeLeon Guerrero (D-Saipan) of their "difficult decision" to withdraw Rabauliman's name as their appointee to the CEC board.

Gov. Arnold I. Palacios first appointed Rabauliman to serve a four-year term with the CEC board last Sept. 6, 2023, representing the Third Senatorial District, or Saipan and Northern Islands, but then withdrew that appointment last December due to time constraint. He re-submitted Rabauliman's nomination on Dec. 1, 2023.

The appointment requires the Senate's confirmation.

Rabauliman used to serve as a member of the CEC board. Then-governor Eloy S. Inos appointed her to serve on the CEC board on Aug. 7, 2013, and she was subsequently confirmed by the Senate.

OPA requests for $1.7M budget for FY25

FERDIE DE LA TORRE

The Office of the Public Auditor on Capital Hill.

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Office of the Public Auditor has requested a $1.7-million budget for fiscal year 2025, which is lower by $163,000 compared to the approved budget of $1.8 million in the previous fiscal year.

Temporary public auditor Dora I. Deleon Guerrero submitted OPA's budget request for fiscal year 2025 to special assistant for Management and Budget Virginia C. Villagomez on Monday.

Deleon Guerrero also gave copies of OPA's budget submission to the members of the Interagency Audit Coordinating Advisory Group.

She said OPA has reduced operational costs at all levels to help ease the financial burdens of the local government.

She said OPA will continue to evaluate its resource needs to ensure that it is able to execute its mandates efficiently and effectively with available resources.

Deleon Guerrero said OPA will apply for and submit a proposal for the 2025 Technical Assistance Program Grant through the Office of Insular Affairs to support personnel training costs and replace outdated equipment.

If awarded, she said, their proposed budget would be reduced accordingly.

OPA's duties and responsibilities include doing audits on Commonwealth agencies, activities, contracts, and grants, and preventing and detecting fraud, waste, and abuse of public funds.

OPA is also responsible for enforcing the Government Ethics Code and the campaign finance disclosure provisions of the NMI Election Law.

Public invited to community college board meeting today

Community college boards throughout Micronesia will come together today, Feb. 28, 2024, at 4pm at Crowne Plaza Resort Saipan's Hibiscus Hall for an in-person meeting to strengthen and formalize collaborative engagement and cooperative efforts among regional colleges.

Northern Marianas College will be hosting college trustees from Guam, the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of Palau, and the Republic of the Marshall Islands for this historic convening.

Members of the public are cordially invited to this meeting as observers as the trustees formalize this regional cooperation. Space is limited at this event. ***(PR)***

PUBLIC NOTICE

The CNMI Department of Commerce, Central Statistics Division will start the CNMI 2024 Prevailing Wage Study (PWS) survey beginning on March 01, 2024 and notifies all businesses and employers in the CNMI to log on to the CSD Data Collection Portal and complete the PWS survey questionnaire.

All businesses and employers (Private & Public), with and with no employees, are urged to complete this survey before March 15, 2024.

Data Collection Portal Link: http://cnmidata.commerce.gov.mp/dev1/

‘There should be straw poll in CNMI for US President, VP’

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Senate President Edith E. DeLeon Guerrero (D-Saipan) believes all American citizens, including CNMI voters, should have the right to vote for the U.S. President that will govern them.

DeLeon Guerrero introduced last Monday during a Senate session a bill to authorize a straw poll or vote for U.S. President and Vice President during the the CNMI general elections.

CNMI residents who are U.S. citizens are not allowed to vote for U.S. President and Vice President. This anomaly, DeLeon Guerrero said, means CNMI residents have no say as to who governs the country.

DeLeon Guerrero

She noted that, although CNMI voters participate in Democratic and Republican presidential primary or caucus events, the U.S. Electoral College system does not provide for electors from the U.S. territories (CNMI, Guam, Puerto Rico, U.S. Virgin Islands, and American Samoa, and the U.S. minor outlying islands) to vote for President and Vice President.

Despite this inability to cast an official vote for President and Vice President, DeLeon Guerrero said it is important for CNMI voters to exercise their right to vote by choosing their candidate for President and Vice President on a CNMI election ballot.

As U.S. citizens, she said, CNMI voters’ choice for President and Vice President should be recorded and shared with the U.S. Congress.

She cited that Guam’s electoral commission is mandated under a 1979 law to hold a presidential vote, and later count its ballots and present the non-binding results to the U.S. Congress. She said the presidential vote is a straw poll that has no impact on who actually wins the U.S. presidency as Guam has no Electoral College vote.

DeLeon Guerrero said Guam’s presidential election straw poll is a non-binding four-year exercise that serves merely as an early indicator for how the rest of the U.S. mainland will vote.

She said conducting a presidential election straw poll in CNMI elections will demonstrate to the U.S. Congress that CNMI voters are determined to vote for the President and Vice President, whether officially or unofficially.

Chamber to present ‘Teamwork & Team Building’ in 1st Quarter Professional Development Training

The Saipan Chamber of Commerce is thrilled to announce its 1st Quarter Professional Development Training, focused on “Teamwork & Team Building.” Save the date for this training session on Thursday, Feb. 29, 2024, running from 9am to 12pm at the Marianas Business Plaza, sixth floor, Suite 604.

Facilitated by Jim Arenovski from Island Training Solutions, this training is designed to empower participants with valuable insights and practical strategies to enhance teamwork within their organizations. The comprehensive agenda covers key aspects such as:

- Establishing a thorough orientation and onboarding process for new team members.
- Articulating the mission and expectations under Company “Mission Possible” to guide team performance.
- Engaging the team in an aspiration exercise to collectively define and aim for high-performance standards.
- Ensuring team expectations are met through a commitment to clarity, consistency, attentive listening, and follow-through.
- Implementing coaching strategies to support continuous improvement and development within the team.
- Evaluating team composition to identify any missing elements contributing to building a truly great team.
- Emphasizing effective communication strategies to maximize collaboration and understanding within the team.

Seize the opportunity to elevate your team’s performance and strengthen your organization’s collaborative spirit by registering to be a part of this dynamic and interactive session that will provide attendees with practical tools and strategies to foster a positive and productive team environment.

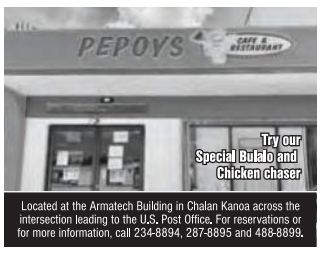
For more information or to secure your seat, reach out to the Saipan Chamber of Commerce at (670) 234-7150 or email contactus@saipanchamber.org. Register now to reserve your spot!

The Chamber is a non-profit organization in the CNMI with a membership of 140 members and growing. It is committed to empowering enterprise as a resource, advocate, and connector for Saipan’s private sector, and its vision is to create an island where businesses, family, and the community succeed as one. ***(PR)***

CNMI OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

MEETING WITH DOT

Gov. Arnold I. Palacios recently met with senior leaders of the Department of Transportation-Maritime Administration, including Temekia Flack, deputy administrator, and Jack Kammerer, MARAD executive director, as a follow-up to previous discussions that included the CNMI’s ongoing efforts to access MARAD funding opportunities for port improvements and development. Palacios was in Washington. D.C. last week for the 2024 senior plenary of the Interagency Group on Insular Areas organized by the U.S. Department of Interior-Office of Insular Affairs. The event remains one of the important platforms for territorial governors to amplify local issues and perspectives by communicating them directly to the White House and federal agencies.



Located at the Armatech Building in Chalan Kanoa across the intersection leading to the U.S. Post Office. For reservations or for more information, call 234-8894, 267-8895 and 488-8899.

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Division of Coastal Resources Management
P.O. Box 501304, Saipan, MP 96950
Tel: (670) 664-8300; Fax: (670) 664-8315
www.dcrm.gov.mp

Richard V. Salas
Director, DCRM

NOTICE OF RENEWAL

CRM WATERSPORTS AND RECREATIONAL PERMIT

RENEWAL DEADLINE: MAY 30TH, 2024

NOTICE TO ALL CNMI MARINE SPORTS OPERATORS

THE DIVISION OF COASTAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT (DCRM) OF THE BUREAU OF ENVIRONMENTAL AND COASTAL QUALITY (BECQ-DCRM) WOULD LIKE TO REMIND ALL MARINE SPORT OPERATORS THAT ALL WATERSPORTS AND RECREATIONAL PERMITS WILL EXPIRE ON MAY 30TH, 2024. TO AVOID ANY INTERRUPTION OF YOUR WATERSPORTS ACTIVITIES, PLEASE SUBMIT **A COMPLETE CRM PERMIT APPLICATION** TO DCRM ON OR BEFORE THE MAY 30TH DEADLINE. TO ENSURE A SUCCESSFUL SUBMISSION OF YOUR CRM PERMIT APPLICATION, PLEASE ATTACH ALL REQUIRED SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS WITH YOUR COMPLETED APPLICATION INCLUDING A COPY OF YOUR PAYMENT RECEIPT ISSUED BY THE CNMI TREASURY. IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE APPLICANT TO ENSURE THAT THEIR CRM PERMIT APPLICATION IS FINAL AND COMPLETE PRIOR TO SUBMISSION. SUBMISSION OF AN INCOMPLETE APPLICATION WILL BE “TABLED” UNTIL APPLICANT SUBMITS ALL REQUIRED DOCUMENTS.

ANY APPLICATION RECEIVED AFTER THE MAY 30TH DEADLINE, WILL BE CONSIDERED AS A NEW PERMIT APPLICATION AND IS SUBJECT TO AN INITIAL FEE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CRM RULES AND REGULATIONS, NMIAC 15-10-205(H)(4)).

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR ASSISTANCE, PLEASE CONTACT MR. NEIL TAISACAN OR MS. PRIMROSE TAITANO AT permitting@dcrm.gov.mp OR, BY CALLING (670) 664-8300.

/s/ RICHARD V. SALAS
DCRM DIRECTOR

TEO

From page 1

Attorney General Feleti Teo was named prime minister of the tiny South Pacific nation Monday after elections a month ago ousted the last government leader.

Teo was the only candidate nominated by his 15 lawmaker colleagues and Governor General Tofiga Vaevalu Falani declared him elected without a vote, government secretary Tufoua Panapa said in a statement.

The swearing-in ceremony for Teo and his Cabinet will be held later this week.

It was not immediately clear how the new government will affect China's influence in the country of around 11,500 people halfway between Australia and Hawaii, though one expert said he does not expect any change in diplomatic recognition, at least in the short term.

The previous prime minister, Kausea Natano, and three of his eight ministers were not reelected in the Jan. 26 election.

Natano had wanted Tuvalu to remain one of only 12 countries that have official diplomatic ties with Taiwan, the self-governed democracy that China claims as its own territory.

Natano's former finance minister, Seve Paeniu, who was considered a leadership contender, had argued for Tuvalu's relationships with both Beijing and Taiwan to be reviewed.

In Beijing, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Mao Ning urged Tuvalu to switch diplomatic recognition to China.

"We call on a handful of countries that still keep the so-called relationship with the Taiwan region to stand on the right side of history and make the right decision that truly serves their long-term interest," she said.

Nauru, another Pacific island nation, cut ties with Taiwan and restored them with China last month.

A proposed security treaty between Tuvalu and Australia could be rewritten or scrapped under the new government. The treaty, announced in November last year, commits Australia to help Tuvalu in response to major natural disasters, pandemics and military aggression.

Australia offered Tuvaluans a lifeline to help residents escape the rising seas and increased storms brought by climate change. Tuvalu's low-lying atolls make it particularly vulnerable to global warming. Australia would initially allow up to 280 Tuvaluans to come to Australia each year.

The treaty, which has yet to be ratified, also would give Australia veto power over any security or defense-related agreement Tuvalu wants to make with any other country, including China.

Tuvalu lawmaker Enele Sopoaga, who was prime minister until the previous election in 2019, opposes the treaty.

Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese mentioned the treaty when he congratulated Teo on his election.

"Australia deeply values our relationship with Tuvalu, in the spirit of the Falepili Union," Albanese said on social media, referring to the treaty, which is formally known as the Australia-Tuvalu Falepili Union.

"Tuvalu can count on Australia's support and I look forward to working with PM Teo," Albanese added.

IPI

From page 1

IPI filed yesterday an emergency motion for a temporary restraining order seeking to prevent the CCC from moving forward with the revocation proceedings, but District Court for the NMI judge David Carter denied the motion, which means the CCC could push forward with revocation proceedings today.

The judge has yet to issue an official order detailing the reason behind his decision to deny IPI's TRO.

In an interview with CCC executive director Andrew Yeom following the hearing, he confirmed that the CCC will commence revocation proceedings at 10am today.

"The TRO was denied so we will be proceeding with revocation proceedings [this] morning as planned. Until 10am today, IPI has the opportunity to satisfy the CCC's orders and, if they do, the hearing may be cancelled. But, unless they comply, then the hearing will go on as planned," he said.

Yeom was actually surprised by the court's denial of IPI's motion, since the casino company's applications for TROs were usually granted in the past.

"I am very surprised that the court denied the TRO based on the track record of previous TROs that were usually granted. This time, IPI argued and we argued why the TRO should be denied and fortunately we were granted a denial," he said.

According to IPI's emergency motion for TRO, submitted by lawyers Stephen Nutting and Michael Chen, relief in the form of a TRO is necessary to preserve the status quo pending adjudication of IPI's pending lawsuits against Gov. Arnold I. Palacios and CCC officials before the district court.

IPI's pending claims essentially challenges, on several grounds, the constitutionality of the CNMI laws and regulations upon which the revocation is being sought.

IPI, in its pending lawsuits, also claims the CCC lacks jurisdiction to adjudicate claims arising from the Casino License Agreement. CCC moving forward with revocation proceedings ultimately negates IPI's claims regarding CCC's jurisdiction to adjudicate.

According to IPI's lawsuit, IPI committed in 2014 to a long-term investment of $3.14 billion to the CNMI for the development of a casino and hotel complex after the parent company of IPI, Best Sunshine International Ltd., was awarded an exclusive license to operate a casino in CNMI.

Plaintiff's commitment was memorialized in the CLA between IPI and CNMI, which was represented by CNMI's Lottery Commission and its acting attorney general.

Under the CLA, the authority of the Lottery Commission ceased and the Office of the Governor and the Commonwealth Casino Commission became charged with implementing and enforcing the CLA.

Under the CLA, IPI is required to pay an annual license fee of $15 million.

IPI now claims that, despite the significant license fee it already paid, the CNMI went around the CLA and enacted by statute and regulation an annual "regulatory fee" of over $3 million to be paid by IPI above and beyond its annual license fee.

"This fee, purportedly justified as necessary to pay for CCC's own regulatory costs, was in actuality required 'regardless of the actual costs incurred by the [CCC]," said the lawsuit.

Under the CCC's Rules and Regulations, the CNMI also gave the CCC unilateral authority to amend or revoke the license based on failure to comply with the requirements of the CLA or other conditions, notwithstanding the CLA's reservation of exclusive jurisdiction in the courts of CNMI over disputes concerning the CLA.

"Nonetheless, through the first several years under the CLA, IPI invested hundreds of millions of dollars toward development of the project and was able to meet these onerous fees. Then the occurrence of several force majeure events arose, most notably the global COVID-19 pandemic, which shuttered IPI's operations. These events caused plaintiff's revenues to plummet from $412 million in 2018 to $3.1 million in 2020. As a result, IPI was unable to meet certain payment obligations under the CLA, including the $3 million regulatory fee," said IPI.

In 2020, CCC issued several orders filed by Yeom that IPI had violated the CLA. The CCC suspended IPI's gaming license, ordering IPI to pay a total of $18.65 million that was due under the CLA's Annual License Fee and Annual Regulatory Fee regulations, and imposing $6.6 million in penalties against IPI.

A longer version of this story is available at www. saipantribune.com

CRUZ

From page 1

the diligence and courage demonstrated by Dr. Cruz throughout the process and his decision to opt for an effective alternative to the grievance resolution," said the statement.

The parties, without going into detail, state that the resolution addresses both parties' concerns. The terms of the settlement were not disclosed

"This resolution was of paramount importance, as it manifested the collective intention of the Public School System and the aggrieved party, Dr. Bobby Cruz, an employee of PSS, to address the underlying issues pertaining to the PSS' grievance procedures concerning Commissioners of Education. The PSS respects every right of its employees," said the statement.

PSS, in its statement, said it is committed to fostering an environment that protects the well-being of its students, staff, and personnel.

"As we move forward, PSS remains committed to fostering an environment that protects, promotes, and safeguards the well-being of students, staff, and personnel. We acknowledge the diligence and courage demonstrated by Dr. Cruz throughout the process and his decision to opt for an effective alternative to the grievance resolution. Together, we pledge to create an environment that reflects our dedication to putting 'Students First' while fostering a culture within the workplace aimed to uphold our values for high standards of professionalism and respect," said the statement.

This comes three weeks after Cruz's defense team sent out a written motion to the Board of Education and administrative hearing officer Catherine J. Cachero in his ongoing sexual harassment complaint against former Education commissioner Dr. Afred B. Ada.

The motion demanded Cachero's disqualification and for the BOE to issue a finding that he has exhausted all administrative relief. That would've essentially allowed Cruz to bring his complaint to court.

According to *Saipan Tribune* archives, Cruz filed grievance against Ada back in November 2022 accusing the commissioner of sexual harassment and other unprofessional conduct, including a reduction in salary.

JOINT

From page 1

Senate Resources, Economic Development and Programs and Gaming Committee, and House Gaming Committee held in the House chamber, Rep. Edwin K. Propst (Ind-Saipan) also showed a memorandum of understanding between IPI's parent company, the Hong Kong-based Imperial Pacific International Holdings Limited, and Japan-based Kyosei Bank Group dated July 18, 2023, which states that Kyosei Bank Group will be investing $300 million in IPI's casino project on Saipan.

Of the $300 million, $150 million will be used to pay the debts of Imperial Pacific International Holdings Limited, $100 million will be used by IPI to finish the construction of its hotel and operation of the casino on Saipan, and the $50 million will be used to settle IPI disputes.

When asked if this money has ever been transferred to IPI, CCC executive director Andrew Yeom said he just saw the MOU last Monday, since all CCC employees, including himself, were laid off in 2023 and that he was just rehired in December 2023.

Yeom said he still needs to investigate the subject.

The MOU was filed in the U.S. District Court as part of IPI's new request for temporary restraining order.

As for the heated discussion between Cruz and Flores, the whole thing got started when Flores stated that the framers of Public Law 18-56—the law that legalized casino gambling on Saipan—denied her senatorial district (Saipan) a fair and just casino industry, because all the other senatorial districts rely on monies that come from Saipan.

Cruz pointed out that they are at the meeting to listen and hear the CCC to give them updates on what's happening.

"We're not here to accuse senatorial districts, who's at fault, who voted for the casino. Can you please understand that, Rep. Flores? That we're not here to debate over senatorial districts," Cruz said.

Both Cruz and Flores later left the meeting.

Sen. Corina L. Magofna (Ind-Saipan), who chairs the Senate committee side, said they did not have a meeting to argue amongst each other but to get some answers from CCC.

Before the heated discussion with Cruz, Flores told Yeom that it's very evident that the framers of Public Law 18-56, and those who supported it, deliberately made it impenetrable.

"You cannot penetrate anything at this point. They made that difficult to even go as far as having one sole license. …That was an injustice," Flores said.

She said the fact that the framers even developed and designed that public law to read as such and then people actually voted for that was a disgrace.

"It's very disgraceful. Because if there's anyone that suffers now is senatorial district 3," Flores said.

Propst said most lawmakers will agree that they are pushing for the revocation of IPI's exclusive casino license. He said it's something many of their constituents have been asking for. He said the time for negotiating with IPI is just not going to happen as IPI has no proof whatsoever of having any money.

"They've been showing us MOUs that are worthless," said Propst as he urged the casino commissioners to do everything possible with the attorney general's help to revoke IPI's license.

Most importantly, he said, he urged the CCC to prioritize looking into the structural integrity of the IPI building.

"The last thing we want is one of those tiles to fall on somebody. …Those are huge plates and they're heavy," he said.

CCC board vice chair Rafael Demapan said he will be presiding over the revocation hearing today, Wednesday, and that he had been advised by their lawyer not to say a word just to make sure that he remains unbiased on the issue for the hearing, and diligent in his role as a regulatory body.

"I must also remind the members of the sensitivity and the timing of the case for tomorrow," Demapan said.

Yeom provided the committees with the update of the status of the lawsuits filed by IPI against the CCC and Gov. Arnold I. Palacios.

Yeom also provided updates on what the CCC is trying to do with the ongoing settlement discussions with IPI. He also answered many questions and concerns raised by committee members.

Japanese school joins MHS for its annual Cultural Day festivities

By DAPHNE CRUZAT
d.cruzat03@gmail.com
CORRESPONDENT

Marianas High School held its 55th annual Cultural Day last Saturday, Feb. 24, 2024, in a celebration that was also attended by 150 visiting students from the Seisa Gakuan School in Japan.

The event, which saw a variety of booths and performances that depicted numerous cultures from around the world, showcased performances on the cultures of Chuuk, Tahiti, the Philippines, Palau, Korea, Chamorro, and Carolinian. The Seisa Gakuen exchange students also displayed their talents, with martial arts performances that showcased both karate and kendo.

MHS vice principal Romolo Orsini said they are ecstatic about the event. "Cultural Day for Marianas High School is our staple event. We're the largest school in the CNMI and we want to highlight our indigenous cultures and other cultures that make up life here in the Marianas," he said.

One MHS student, Fioana Bayot, said the occasion is not just about showcasing the CNMI's culture. "It's also about us making connections with other cultures," she said.

Most booths were decorated around the theme of different cultures and sold traditional food items. Other booths fundraised through activities such as a dunk tank, bouncy house, and jail.

The Seisa Gakuan School joined in the fundraising event by selling secondhand items such as clothing, houseware, and other miscellaneous items.

Orsini said all profits made from the event will go toward supporting student programs.

Many of the school's clubs participated in the event to raise funds for their respective events.

Jane Mozunder, who is the secretary of the school's Mock Trial Club, said this event will help their club for a planned trip. "We are here to raise money for our club's upcoming trip to compete nationally. We would like to showcase that the CNMI can do law too," she said.

DAPHNE CRUZAT
The Parent Teacher Association was in charge of the token booth.

DAPHNE CRUZAT
Mock Trial Club members pose at their game booth.

DAPHNE CRUZAT
Polksai Chamorro Club performs a traditional piece to showcase the indigenous Chamorro culture.

DAPHNE CRUZAT
Seisa Japanese exchange students take the spotlight and perform kendo, a form of martial arts, during Marianas High School's Cultural Day last Saturday.

DAPHNE CRUZAT
One Day at a Time Club members pose at their Mexican-themed booth.

NOTICE OF DISSOLUTION

The following companies are filing their Notice of Dissolution effective February 28, 2024

1. Dragon Capital, LLC
2. Macco LLC
3. Saipan Global, LLC
4. Kander Investment Corporation
5. Town-Net International, Inc. PO BOX 50140 CHRB Saipan, MP 96950
6. BTB LLC
7. Taiwan-CNMI Chamber of Commerce PMB 404 Box 10000 Saipan, MP 96950
8. GARLIQ USA, LLC PMB 707 PPP Box 10000 Saipan, MP 96950

DIVISION OF PROCUREMENT SERVICES
CNMI GOVERNMENT

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL
ITB NO.: RFP24-DCCA/DYS-42400044

SUBMISSION DATE: MARCH 21, 2024 TIME: 09:00 A.M.

"TO PROVIDE A COMPREHENSIVE COUNSELING AND WRAP AROUND SERVICES FOR THE DCCA-DIVISION OF YOUTH SERVICES CLIENTS AND FAMILY MEMBERS SERVED UNDER THE CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES, EMERGENCY SHELTER, JUVENILE PROBATION AND THE FAMILY AND YOUTH ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM"

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE OBTAINED ON THE MUNIS VENDOR SELF SERVICE PORTAL (https://selfservice.dof.gov.mp/vss/) OR AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF PROCUREMENT SERVICES, LOCATED AT BLDG NO. 12552, ANATAHAN DRIVE, CAPTIOL HILL, SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

QUESTIONS REGARDING THIS RFP CAN BE MADE TO THE DIVISION OF YOUTH SERVICES, BY MARCH 15, 2024, TO MS. VIVIAN T. SABLAN VIA EMAIL AT vtsablan@dys.gov.mp

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CNMI PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

THE CNMI GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, OR PORTIONS THEREOF, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/S/ VIVIAN T. SABLAN
ADMINISTRATOR,DYS

/S/ BRIEN S. NICHOLAS JR.
ACTING DIRECTOR, PS

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY

MAIN OFFICE: SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, 2ND FLOOR ARRIVAL BLDG.
PO BOX 501055•SAIPAN•MP•96950
PHONE: (1-670) 237-6500/1 • FAX: (1-670) 234-5962
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AMENDED REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATION STATEMENTS FOR ARCHITECTURAL/ENGINEERING DESIGN AND PLANNING SERVICES

SAIPAN HARBOR DREDGING PROJECT
PORT OF SAIPAN
PROJECT NO. CPA-SS-002-24

The Commonwealth Ports Authority (CPA) is a public corporation and autonomous agency of the Government of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI). In accordance with its Procurement Rules and Regulations, CPA is soliciting statements of professional qualifications from interested Consultants for Architectural and Engineering (A/E) Design and Planning Services for the Saipan Harbor Dredging Project at the Port of Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas Islands, Project No. CPA-SS-002-24.

The project is being funded by the U.S. Maritime Administration and is in accordance and compliance with CPA's Procurement Rules and Regulations, Section 40-50-202, Architect-Engineer Design and Construction Management Services.

The Request for Qualification (RFQ) Package is available at CPA's Administration Office, 2nd floor of the arrival terminal at the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport. No fee is required for obtaining the RFQ package. Electronic copies may be made available upon written request to Ms. Wendi Prater at wprater@cnmiports.com or Ms. Sheri Llagas at receptionist@cnmiports.com.

Questions regarding this request for qualification statements must be submitted to Ms. Prater, CPA's Executive Assistant/Project Manager, via email to wprater@cnmiports.com or hand delivered to the CPA Administration Office, by no later than 5:00 p.m. CHST, Friday, February 16, 2024.

The statements of professional qualification will be evaluated based on the criteria available in the RFQ package.

Interested Consultants are requested to submit one (1) original, four (4) copies and one (1) electronic version in .pdf of their professional qualification statements, no later than **5:00 p.m. CHST, FRIDAY, MARCH 1, 2024.** Statements of qualification must be presented by a combination of both brochures and the use of current U.S. Government Standard Form 330.

The CPA reserves the right to reject any or all statements of professional qualification for any reason, if in its sole opinion to do so would be in its best interest.

/s/ LEO B. TUDELA
Executive Director

Date: February 7, 2024

CNMI GOVERNMENT
PROCUREMENT SERVICES

INVITATION TO BID
ITB NO.: ITB24-DPW/TSD-42400047

SUBMISSION DATE: MARCH 14, 2024 TIME: 09:00 A.M.

"(A) LEASE OF TWO (2) CLASS 'F' VEHICLE"
"(B) LEASE OF ONE (1) CLASS 'E' VEHICLE"

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE OBTAINED ON THE MUNIS VENDOR SELF SERVICE PORTAL (https://selfservice.dof.gov.mp/vss/) OR AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF PROCUREMENT SERVICES, LOCATED AT BLDG NO. 12552, ANATAHAN DRIVE, CAPTIOL HILL, SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

QUESTIONS REGARDING THIS ITB CAN BE MADE TO THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS, TECHINICAL SERVICES DIVISION BY MARCH 6, 2024, TO MR. KENN ALDAN VIA EMAIL AT kla@dpwtsd@gmail.com

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CNMI PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

THE CNMI GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, OR PORTIONS THEREOF, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/S/ RAY N. YUMUL
SECRETARY, DPW

/S/ BRIEN SERS NICHOLAS JR.
Acting Director, Division of Procurement Services

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM, OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
Tel: (670) 664-2371 | Fax: (670) 664-2408 | Caller Box 10007, Saipan, MP 96950

INVITATION TO BID
ITB24-GOV/CIP-42400049

BUILDING 1325 REPAIRS, RENOVATION AND IMPROVEMENTS

SUBMISSION DATE: 10:00 AM ChST MARCH 22, 2024

Governor Arnold I. Palacios and Lt. Governor David M. Apatang, through the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) are soliciting sealed bids for the *"Building 1325 Repairs, Renovation and Improvements"* project in Capitol Hill, Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. This project will be funded by the 702 Covenant funding under the U.S. Department of Interior, Office of Insular Affairs.

The project package will be available in digital format only on **February 21, 2024** at the Capital Improvement Program Office, Office of the Governor, Juan A. Sablan Administration Building in Capitol Hill, Saipan, during regular working hours or online at Vendor Self Service at *selfservice.dof.gov.mp/vss/Vendors/VBids.*

A Pre-Bid Conference will be held at the project site located in Capitol Hill, Saipan at **10:00 AM ChST March 7, 2024.** Bidders may request to participate via phone call or virtually five (5) days prior to the meeting scheduled. *Questions* regarding this ITB may be sumitted via email to Ms. Sunny Aldan-Salas at sunny.aldan@gov.mp no later than **4:30 PM ChST March 14, 2024.** All Questions & Answers will be shared with all prospective bidders.

Bidders located outside of the CNMI must fill out and submit the Notice of Intent to Bid Form to the Acting Director of Procurement Services via email (bidintent@dof.gov.mp) no later than **10:00 AM ChST, March 22, 2024.**

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CNMI PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS, AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

THE CNMI GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY AND ALL BIDS, OR PORTIONS THEREOF, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/S/ Arnold I. Palacios
Governor, CNMI

/S/ Brien S. Nicholas Jr., Acting Director
CNMI Procurement Services

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER
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MEMBER

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DIST. BY KING FEATURES SYNDICATE
MIKE SMITH
LAS VEGAS SUN 2024
HOUSE REPUBLICANS CONTINUE TO HOLD UP AID TO UKRAINE.
PUTIN IS WRITING THANK-YOU NOTES AS WE SPEAK.

EDITORIAL

House Speaker Mike Johnson must stop dithering on Ukraine aid and hold a vote

Two years after Russia's brutal and unprovoked invasion, Ukraine continues to defend its territory bravely but has withdrawn its forces from a key city under attack and is short of weapons and ammunition. But because of partisan paralysis in Washington—and the malign influence of Donald J. Trump—a proposal for tens of billions of dollars in additional assistance remains stalled. President Joe Biden has fairly accused House Republicans of "walking away from the threat of Russia."

Earlier this month the Senate voted 70-29 to pass a bill that would provide Ukraine with an additional $60.1 billion. It also includes $14.1 billion to assist Israel as it battles Hamas and nearly $10 billion for humanitarian aid for Palestinians and other civilians caught in war zones. If a vote on the Senate bill were held, there is a good chance that the House would approve it.

Yet House Speaker Mike Johnson has yet to agree to hold a vote on the aid package citing the Republican mantra that desperately needed aid for Ukraine must be linked to restrictions on migration at America's southern border. "House Republicans were crystal clear from the very beginning of discussions that any so-called national security supplemental legislation must recognize that national security begins at our own border," Johnson huffed.

Never mind that a bipartisan group of senators, with the encouragement of the White House, came up with a compromise bill that would have done exactly that, only to face opposition from Senate Republicans and Trump. Before the text of the compromise was finalized, the former president and likely Republican nominee blustered that "I do not think we should do a Border Deal, at all, unless we get EVERYTHING needed to shut down the INVASION of Millions & Millions of people, many from parts unknown, into our once great, but soon to be great again, Country!" Johnson similarly objected that the compromise proposal contained "insufficient border provisions."

Johnson reportedly has sought a meeting with Biden to talk about funding for Ukraine and Israel, and the president is open to such a discussion. Some House members are also pressing for a separate measure that would be less generous in aid to Ukraine. But time is of the essence. The Senate-passed bill provides an appropriate level of new funding for Ukraine. The House should expeditiously vote on it.

That it hasn't done so is a reflection of a larger problem in the Republican-controlled House (and we use the term "controlled" loosely). Because the party's majority is so narrow, a small group of extremists has exerted disproportionate influence, including in the successful effort to topple former Speaker Kevin McCarthy. McCarthy launched—and Johnson endorsed the formalization of—a baseless impeachment inquiry into Biden that has become an embarrassment for the party.

The dysfunction of House Republicans reflects the lamentable

See HOUSE on Page 7

Biden should be like Ike to curb Israel

By STEPHEN MIHM
Bloomberg Opinion

Stephen Mihm, a professor of history at the University of Georgia, is coauthor of Crisis Economics: A Crash Course in the Future of Finance.

As Israel's Gaza offensive has grown ever more deadly and destructive, President Joe Biden has equivocated: condemning the civilian death toll while simultaneously sending more arms to Israel. This position, though perhaps politically expedient at the outset of the conflict, has become untenable.

Now, as the war threatens to destabilize the entire region, Biden should take a more forceful stance, much as one of his predecessors did. In 1956, President Dwight "Ike" Eisenhower successfully defused the Suez Crisis, forcing Israel and its allies—as well as the president's own political rivals—to back down. Eisenhower's willingness to confront Israel offers a model, however imperfect, for today.

At the beginning of 1956, the Suez Canal remained in the hands of British and French interests, much as it had been for nearly a century. That summer, though, Egypt's president, Gamal Abdel Nasser, seized control of this critical conduit, effectively cutting off the flow of Middle Eastern oil to Europe. The move also hit Israel, denying its ships passage through the canal.

Nasser's act, the culmination of rising tensions between Egypt and European powers, set off a major crisis. Britain and France, eager to reclaim some of their former influence in the region, forged an alliance with Israel, which had already clashed with Egypt in 1948. Together the three nations crafted a plan dubbed "Operation Musketeer": Israel would invade Egypt's Sinai Peninsula, as well as Gaza, which was then under Egyptian control. Britain and France would then land troops in the canal zone in a bid to overthrow Nasser.

News of the plan left Eisenhower aghast. Though the president counted all three countries as allies, he had cultivated relations with the newly independent Arab nations as well, in part to check Soviet influence in the region. Eisenhower, who had previously warned Britain against using force in the region, resolved to curb his Cold War allies if they proceeded with the plan.

This was not without risk: a direct confrontation with Britain, France, and Israel could backfire not just internally, but also closer to home. With the presidential election set to take place a week later, Eisenhower could ill afford to alienate pro-Israel voters in key states, particularly because his opponent, Adlai Stevenson, had tried to make Eisenhower's foreign policy a campaign issue.

Israel and its allies undoubtedly expected that these considerations would sideline Eisenhower and proceeded with their plan. Israel moved first, invading Egypt on October 29. When Eisenhower pushed for a United Nations resolution calling for Israel to withdraw, Britain and France vetoed the measure—again, expecting that this would settle the issue.

It did not. Instead, Eisenhower delivered a national address on October 31 declaring that the US would not countenance the invasion. "In all the recent troubles in the Middle East, there have indeed been injustices suffered by all nations involved," Eisenhower said. "But I do not believe that another instrument of injustice—war—is the remedy for these wrongs."

Eisenhower understood that eloquence alone wouldn't force a withdrawal, particularly as Britain and France made it clear they would proceed with the plan. Ike now played hardball, informing the Brits through back channels that the US would no longer help prop up the value of the pound sterling, which was already in freefall. The gambit worked: in the face of potential economic crisis, Britain had no choice but to back down and soon withdrew its troops. France followed suit, furious but unable to proceed without Britain by its side.

Israel, though, refused to withdraw. Eisenhower was not pleased. He turned again to diplomatic back channels, this time to threatening to support a UN resolution that would ban all public and private aid to Israel, including the tens of millions of dollars the nation received from the US each year. At first, Israel refused to budge. But Eisenhower was unwavering—even as Democrats in Congress, led by future president Lyndon Baines Johnson, threatened to revolt.

As the year came to a close, Eisenhower combined the stick with a carrot: reassurances that the US recognized Israel's right to defend itself should Nasser take any measures to threaten the nation. By March of 1957, Israel bowed to reality and withdrew its forces, ceding control of the territory it had captured. Egypt reopened the canal the following month, and while tensions over free passage of cargo persisted, the Suez Crisis had come to an end.

What can Biden learn from this episode? While it's tempting to suggest that he should simply emulate Eisenhower, the reality is more complicated. Egypt's seizure of the Suez Canal wasn't anywhere near as deadly or abhorrent as the attacks launched by Hamas. Moreover, Israel today is a far more powerful and established country than it was in 1956, and quite mindful of the fact that the US failed to honor Eisenhower's commitment a decade later, a betrayal that helped set the stage for the Six-Day War.

Still, Eisenhower's bedrock belief—that the US should put stabilizing the Middle East ahead of propping up its allies—remains relevant today. If Israel proceeds with an invasion of Rafah, it will unleash a refugee crisis that could rupture the tenuous peace Egypt and Israel currently enjoy. Eisenhower would not have let such a

See BIDEN on Page 7

EDITORIAL POLICY Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

A world-class Saipan Marathon

MAKING TOURISM OUR BUSINESS
By CHRISTOPHER A. CONCEPCION
Special to Saipan Tribune

Christopher A. Concepcion is managing director of the Marianas Visitors Authority.

On March 9, 2024, the Marianas will host Saipan Marathon 2024, with 407 registrants to date. That's a solid number!

Any marathon is quite a feat—26.2 miles of sweat, pain, and old-fashioned grit. We salute the valiant who have signed on for the challenge, as well as the many others who will participate in the half-marathon, 10K and 5K. Go, runners!

The Marianas Visitors Authority's vision for Saipan Marathon is much bigger than laying out cones and promoting just another marathon. We are working to build on the solid foundation we have already set to offer a world-class event that will attract a growing number of international runners year after year. Why? Well, 26,000 people joined the Honolulu Marathon last year. The economic potential is significant, and running events are easy to travel for. All you need is a pair of running shoes.

> **'Your little efforts—collectively—will go a long way toward making Saipan Marathon one to remember—and one to return to.'**

I'm pleased to say the biggest hurdle for having a world-class event has already been achieved. For several years now, except for a brief period during COVID-19, the Saipan Marathon course has been certified by World Athletics in cooperation with the Association of International Marathons and Distance Races. This is an international certification that serious runners expect, and Saipan Marathon meets the mark.

Second to that, we need a timing system that will give participants accurate and valid results. We have that in place, too. For several years, the MVA has contracted a professional timing company from Japan to make sure runners' times are on point, especially for those using Saipan Marathon as a stepping stone to more prestigious races. Thanks also to our race co-organizer—the able-bodied Northern Mariana Athletics—and the many volunteers tracking bib numbers along the course, Saipan Marathon delivers reliable race times.

After over a decade, the organization of the race now comes like clockwork for the marathon team, which is spearheaded by the MVA Community Projects division and includes many government partners, private sponsors, local businesses, community organizations, and individual volunteers. The checklist is long: online registration, the timing system, race packets, course setup, road and medical safety for runners, aid stations, medals and T-shirts, the awards banquet, and everything in between. For the most part, we've got experienced people in the lead, and it shows.

And this is a race we can be proud of, with global brands signing on this year as sponsors, starting with Skechers as Exclusive Title Sponsor of the race. We also have Platinum Sponsor Coca-Cola/Foremost/Subway/Powerade; Gold Sponsors Bridge Capital, IT&E, and Triple J Saipan; Silver Sponsors United Airlines, Matson, The Athlete's Foot, Boarderline and All-Star Sporting Goods; Hotel Association of the Northern Mariana Islands; Northern Marianas Athletics; and Bike Pro. In-kind sponsor is M&E Enterprises Inc. Saipan.

So, how can we collectively make Saipan Marathon bigger and better, and what can individual companies, organizations, and individuals in the community do?

The MVA will continue to spearhead organization and promotion of this event to our source markets. Our mandate is marketing and promotion of the Marianas. We are working to further develop relationships with more running clubs and influencers in our source markets to attract this niche market, and we expect more participants each year. Prior to the pandemic, we once breached the 1,000 mark on participants. We believe we can do that again.

One of the things that could help us reach that goal is continued and expanded support from the business community in terms of discounts and incentives to entice visitors. Big thanks to Crowne Plaza Resort Saipan and Hyatt Regency Saipan for offering exclusive marathon hotel rates this year. That helps! The MVA is delighted to promote these and any other incentives that could be extended to marathoners. Ideally, we will start promoting this summer for the 2025 marathon, so let us know early!

And when you're running 26.2 miles, it doesn't hurt to hear an encouraging word. During the Hell of the Marianas, it was incredible that students from a local MY WAVE club were out on the course early in the morning, cheering the bikers on. We can let our runners know they are welcomed by putting out welcome signs on race week or putting together a cheering team along the course, whether it be your business, your organization, or your family. If your home or place of business is along the 26.2-mile course, we invite you to set up a pop-up tent to cheer on our runners! Make it a family fun day for everyone!

One final thank you I'd like to make is to our island drivers, who make the safety of our race participants a priority. It's been commented that Saipan drivers are more courteous to race participants than what athletes have seen elsewhere. Thanks for helping our visitors enjoy their scenic races in safety.

And the single biggest thing we can do to set Saipan Marathon apart from other marathons is to be hospitable. We invite you to support the efforts of the MVA by personally greeting our visitors on the weekend of March 9 and sharing the warmth of our community with them. Your little efforts—collectively—will go a long way toward making Saipan Marathon one to remember—and one to return to.

Good luck and a safe race to all participants!

BIDEN

From page 6

thing happen. Neither should Biden.

Biden may wish to reread what Eisenhower wrote in his diary at the height of the Suez Crisis, as the words are eerily prescient. The US, Ike concluded, "must be friends with both [Arab and Israeli] contestants in that region in order that we can bring them closer together. To take sides could do nothing but to destroy our influence in leading toward a peaceful settlement of one of the most explosive situations in the world today."

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

SOCA: Soul calypso and the Mighty Sparrow

LITERARY NOOK
By JOEY CONNOLLY
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Joey aka Pepe Batbon Connolly is a retired educator who taught in the CNMI, NOLA, and LVNV. He is a sonnet practitioner who enjoys stargazing.

Some early progenitors of today's rap and hip-hop were scat singing and jive talk from Fats Waller through Cab Calloway, Ella Fitzgerald, and many jazz singers. In the Caribbean islands, calypso singers sang songs with political and socio-economic messages combined with scat-type beats and lyrics.

Readers may go online and listen to Joseph Spence sing *On the Rolling Sea* and you'll hear what I mean. My personal favorite is the Mighty Sparrow, SOCA (soul/calypso) King of Carnival on Trinidad and Tobago for many years. He has written over 50 songs and recorded 70 albums. In 1987 he received an honorary Doctor of Letters (D. Litt) and in 2015 was awarded an OBE Officer of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire. He lives in Queens, NY and recorded a new album with full orchestra, *Live* at 85, in 2020. His song, *Interdependence*, was recorded in 1979.

Interdependence

Sung by the Mighty Sparrow

Independence, who is totally independent
Freedom, is there absolute freedom
Like the sunshine needs rainy weather we all need one another
It really shouldn't matter what's a person's color creed or race
I believe in equal opportunity for everyone and equal place
Dependence on each other for freedom and survival are unmistakably and essentially vital, in other words, '

(chorus)
I need you, you need me.

Together we can be happy, sometimes I may not show it and you may not know it, but without me there's no you and vice versa, so the very essence of our Interdependence is peace, love discipline and tolerance.
On commitment, can man long afford non-involvement
A neighbor's crisis we pretend is none of we business
But whatever happens around you has a direct effect upon you
If you should see your neighbors house afire no matter whatever the cause, try and help him put it out at the same time with yours
Yes very often we see for we own security its necessary to assist with enemy, may I repeat:

(chorus)
I need you, you need me…

Financial aid we must give or get and we must trade
Foodstuff seems man could never produce enough
Scientific breakthrough in medicine is for improved health in every person. Penicillin was one of those that disease we can control
an accidental discovery by man for man throughout the world
Judicial protection, spiritual instruction must be rendered by man to save man. May I repeat

(chorus)
I need you, you need me.

The very essence of our interdependence is peace, love, discipline, and tolerance.

HOUSE

From page 6

influence of Trump. His isolationist "America first" approach to foreign policy meshes seamlessly with opposition to more aid for Ukraine. Trump recently suggested that any aid for Ukraine be in the form of a loan, because "we should never give money anymore without the hope of a payback or without " 'strings' attached." Of course, there is already "payback" for the United States and its NATO allies in Ukraine's valiant resistance to Russian aggression. If Vladimir Putin is frustrated in his attempt to subjugate Ukraine, he will be less likely to menace neighboring NATO countries.

To be fair, the opposition to new aid for Ukraine is not completely the result of Trump's influence. Even some Americans who wish Ukraine well and recognize the immorality of Russia's aggression may wonder if it's realistic to hope for a total Ukrainian victory, even with continued aid from Western nations.

As the fighting drags on, the notion of a negotiated settlement becomes more attractive. It's indeed possible that the war might end through negotiations with concessions by Ukraine such as autonomy for pro-Russia inhabitants in the eastern part of the country. But, as Biden has persuasively argued, strengthening Ukraine on the battlefield puts it in the strongest possible position at the negotiating table.

Biden recently put the point in poignant terms, "Look, the Ukrainian people have fought so bravely and heroically," he told reporters. "They've put so much on the line. And the idea that now when they're running out of ammunition, we walk away—I find it absurd. I find it unethical. I find it just contrary to everything we are as a country."

Johnson should stop the dithering and schedule a vote.

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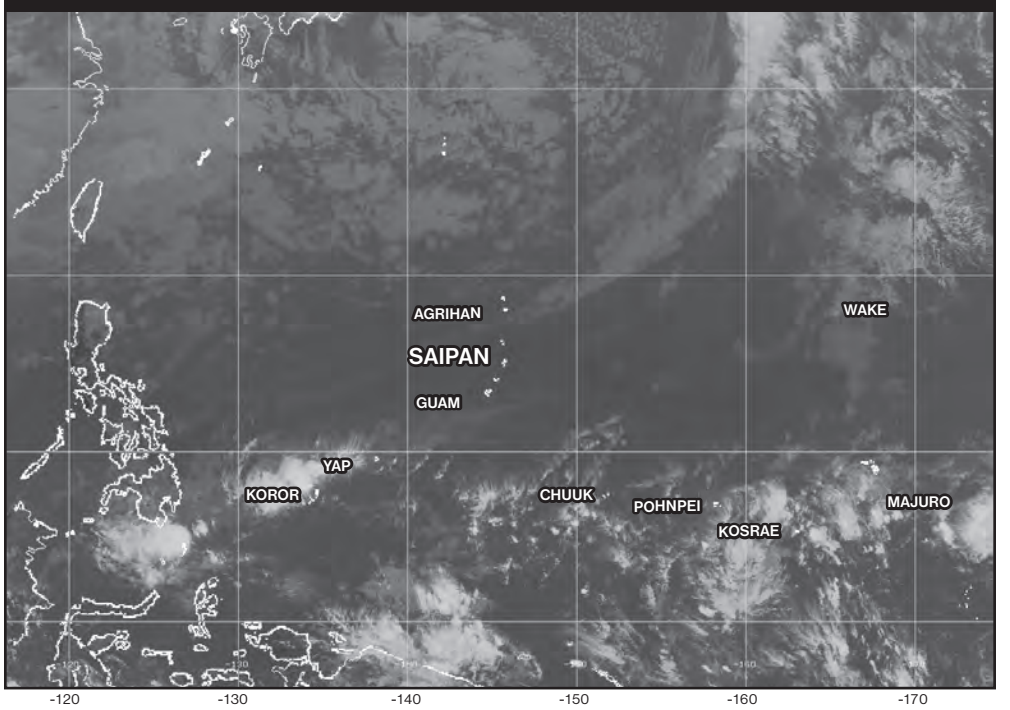
The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TODAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
Partly cloudy with isolated showers. Northeast winds 10 to 15 mph.	Breezy. Mostly cloudy with scattered showers. Northeast winds 15 to 25 mph.	Breezy through Friday night. Partly cloudy with a 20 percent chance of showers.	Breezy. Partly cloudy with a 20 percent chance of showers.	Breezy. Partly cloudy with a 20 percent chance of showers.
86 / 75°	85 / 76°	85 / 75°	85 / 75°	85 / 75°

YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



PICTURE TIME: 8:20 AM TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 2024

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Light to moderate northeasterlies prevail in the region. Satellite imagery indicates partly cloudy skies over Guam waters. Tanapag buoy indicates seas are about 5 feet.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: https://www.weather.gov/gum/

MICRONESIA		▲ ▼ °F
Guam and Rota	Partly Cloudy	86° / 78°
Palau	Cloudy	83° / 77°
Yap	Cloudy	84° / 78°
Chuuk	Sunny	84° / 80°
Pohnpei	Partly Cloudy	84° / 78°
Kosrae	Cloudy	84° / 78°
Majuro	Partly Cloudy	83° / 79°

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:35 AM	6:24 PM
Thursday	6:34 AM	6:24 PM
Friday	6:34 AM	6:24 PM
Saturday	6:33 AM	6:24 PM
Sunday	6:32 AM	6:25 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	-	7:34 AM	7:45 PM
Thursday	-	8:06 AM	8:31 PM
Friday	-	9:49 AM	10:55 PM
Saturday	-	10:29 AM	11:49 PM
Sunday	-	11:15 AM	-

AROUND THE GLOBE		▲ ▼ °F
Auckland	Rain	75° / 66°
Beijing	Fair	40° / 26°
Hong Kong	Partly Cloudy	66° / 57°
Honolulu	Partly Cloudy/Wind	76° / 69°
London	Showers	48° / 37°
Los Angeles	Partly Cloudy	78° / 54°
Manila	Showers	86° / 73°
Melbourne	Sunny	72° / 55°
Miami	Cloudy	69° / 65°
New York	Clear	34° / 30°
Osaka	Partly Cloudy	52° / 34°
Paris	Showers	52° / 39°
Busan	Cloudy	51° / 37°
Rome	Showers	57° / 50°
Salem	Sunny	56° / 35°
San Francisco	Clear	62° / 53°
Seoul	Mostly Cloudy	48° / 31°
Tokyo	Sunny/Wind	54° / 41°
Washington, DC	Fair	66° / 38°

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY		FEET
3:49 AM	Low Tide	0.34
9:54 AM	High Tide	1.67
4:22 PM	Low Tide	0.44
10:07 PM	High Tide	1.53

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF FEBRUARY 1, 2024

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)

UA076	9:50AM	10:35AM	Daily

SAIPAN- NARITA (NRT)

UA824	7:05AM	9:45AM	1, 3, 5

GUAM-MANILA (MNL)

PR 111	5:55AM	7:55AM	Daily
UA193	7:50PM	11:50PM	2, 5 via Palau
UA183	7:55PM	9:50PM	Daily

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

OZ626/703	3:10AM	10:30PM	4, 7 via ICN
7C3403/2305	4:40AM	10:20PM	Daily
UA076/183	9:50AM	9:50PM	Daily via Guam
UA076/193	9:50AM	11:50PM	2, 5 via Guam, Palau

SAIPAN-INCHEON (ICN)

TW308	2:15AM	6:10AM	Daily
OZ626	3:10AM	6:55AM	4,7
7C3403	4:40AM	8:35AM	Daily
7C3461	2:40PM	6:45PM	Daily Feb 7-16 only
7C3405	4:35PM	8:25PM	Daily

ARRIVALS

GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN

UA174	8:00AM	8:45AM	Daily

NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN

UA825	9:25PM	2:00AM+1	2, 4, 7

MANILA (MNL)-GUAM

UA189	00:40AM	6:30AM	3, 6
PR110	10:05PM	3:55AM+1	Daily
UA192	10:40PM	6:30AM+1	2, 5 via Palau
UA184	10:55PM	4:45AM+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

UA189/174	00:40AM	8:45AM+1	3, 6 via Guam
OZ702/625	12:05PM	1:40AM+1	3, 6 via ICN
UA192/174	10:40PM	8:45AM+1	2, 5 via Palau, Guam
UA184/174	10:55PM	8:45AM+1	1, 3, 4, 6,7 via Guam
7C2306/3462	11:15PM	1:30PM+1	Daily Feb 7-16 only
7C2306/3406	11:15PM	3:30PM+1	Daily

INCHEON (ICN)-SAIPAN

7C3462	08:00AM	1:30PM	Daily Feb 7-16 only
7C3406	10:10AM	3:30PM	Daily
TW307	7:45PM	1:15AM+1	Daily
OZ625	8:20PM	1:40AM+1	3, 6
7C3404	10:15PM	3:35AM+1	Daily

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); UA United Airlines; PR, Philippine Airlines; TW, T'Way Air; OZ, Asiana Airlines; 7C, Jeju Air; BX, Air Busan • ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JANUARY 2, 2024

SAIPAN TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
1301	SAIPAN	ROTA	08:30	09:00	Daily
1302	SAIPAN	ROTA	10:30	11:00	Daily
1303	SAIPAN	ROTA	15:30	16:00	Daily

ROTA TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
3101	ROTA	SAIPAN	9:30	10:00	Daily
3102	ROTA	SAIPAN	11:30	12:00	Saturday & Sunday
3103	ROTA	SAIPAN	13:30	14:00	Monday To Friday
3104	ROTA	SAIPAN	16:30	17:00	Daily

ROTA TO GUAM

FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
3401	ROTA	GUAM	11:30	12:00	Monday To Friday

GUAM TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
4301	GUAM	ROTA	12:30	13:00	Monday To Friday

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
1201	SAIPAN	TINIAN	7:30	7:45	Daily
1202	SAIPAN	TINIAN	8:00	8:15	Daily
1203	SAIPAN	TINIAN	9:00	9:15	Daily
1204	SAIPAN	TINIAN	10:00	10:15	Daily
1206	SAIPAN	TINIAN	14:00	14:15	Daily
1207	SAIPAN	TINIAN	15:00	15:15	Daily
1208	SAIPAN	TINIAN	16:00	16:15	Daily
1209	SAIPAN	TINIAN	17:00	17:15	Daily

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
2101	TINIAN	SAIPAN	8:00	8:15	Daily
2102	TINIAN	SAIPAN	8:30	8:45	Daily
2103	TINIAN	SAIPAN	9:30	9:45	Daily
2104	TINIAN	SAIPAN	10:30	10:45	Daily
2106	TINIAN	SAIPAN	14:30	14:45	Daily
2107	TINIAN	SAIPAN	15:30	15:45	Daily
2108	TINIAN	SAIPAN	16:30	16:45	Daily
2109	TINIAN	SAIPAN	17:30	17:45	Daily

Saipan businesses, community welcome cruise ship visitors

Businesses and community members in the Marianas welcomed over 1,500 passengers and crew of the M/S *Artania* cruise ship, which made port on Saipan last Monday, Feb. 26.

The 756-foot vessel pulled up dockside at the Port of Saipan as scheduled at about 7am where it was welcomed by the Marianas Visitors Authority and indigenous Chamorro and Carolinian dancers of local dance troupes Petlas Marianas and Simiyan Marianas. Tour company Pacific Development Inc. was also on hand to help coordinate shuttle service to Garapan, island tours, Managaha tours, and others. The Commonwealth Council for Arts & Culture organized vendors of arts and crafts and local delicacies for the occasion. The Saipan Chamber of Commerce also attended to distribute flyers on behalf of their members.

Some passengers arranged for rental cars, with some companies delivering the vehicles directly to the port for convenience. Taxis lined up for those seeking personalized excursions. For those who preferred to travel on foot, the MVA posted signage from the port to American Memorial Park, leading directly into the main tourist district of Garapan.

MVA

The M/S *Artania* enters the Port of Saipan in the Marianas on March 26, 2024.

MVA

The M/S *Artania* is welcomed with indigenous Chamorro and Carolinian dances at the Port of Saipan in the Marianas on Feb. 26, 2024. The cruise ship has 1,039 passengers and 531 crewmembers aboard, taking advantage of the opportunity to tour Saipan for the day.

On the heels of two cruise ship arrivals bringing 6,000 visitors already this year, the M/S *Artania* brings 1,039 passengers and 531 crewmembers aboard. The *Asuka II* will make port for the day on March 4, 2024, with 710 passengers and 500 crewmembers aboard. A majority of passengers of M/S *Artania* are European, while a majority of passengers of *Asuka II* are Japanese.

"The cruise ship niche market is one the Marianas has been able to capitalize on for many years, and it's clear that there is still a demand for Saipan as a port stop," said MVA acting managing director Judy C. Torres. "It takes a village—so to speak—to keep and grow this market. The MVA markets and promotes the destination to generate demand to visit, the Commonwealth Ports Authority ensures the facilities and services are available, husbanding agents coordinate to meet the needs of each ship, transportation and tour companies stand ready, local business and artists prepare and present their products, and most importantly, our community keeps the island clean and makes our visitors feel welcomed. The Marianas has something special to offer cruise ship tours, and collectively, we will continue to do."

Businesses interested in becoming a member of the Marianas Visitors Authority for further promotion may register online at www.mymarianas.com or contact MVA Community Projects specialist Jack Aranda at jaranda@mymarianas.com or (670) 664-3200. ***(PR)***

MVA

Passengers of M/S *Artania* cruise ship tour downtown Garapan in Saipan, the Marianas on Feb. 26, 2024. The cruise ship has 1,039 passengers and 531 crewmembers aboard, taking advantage of the opportunity to tour Saipan for the day.

UOG agriculture workshop to focus on promising fruit crops for Guam

Gardeners, farmers, and residents are invited to a free public workshop to learn about four lesser grown fruit crops in Guam that can be grown sustainably and without the use of pesticides. The four trees are Surinam cherry (pitanga), eggfruit (chesa), peanut butter fruit, and mulberry.

■ Promising Fruit Trees for Guam Workshop
■ Time: 9am-noon
■ Date: Saturday, March 9
■ Location: UOG Yigo Research & Education Center

The Promising Fruit Trees for Guam Workshop will discuss how these four fruit trees are best propagated, how to care for them, and uses for their fruit. The class will include a one-mile walking tour at the agricultural experiment station to see plantings of each tree type. Each participant will have the opportunity to take home potted seedlings of the featured trees.

This is a Land Grant workshop, being offered through the USDA-funded Beginning Farmer & Rancher Development Program at the University of Guam's Western Pacific Tropical Research Center. It will be led by UOG horticulturist Dr. Robert Bevacqua. The course will also be facilitated by four agriculture students who each spent a semester researching and propagating one of the featured crops through the USDA NextGen grant-funded COMPASS program.

The workshop is free and open to the first 25 participants to register. Email Jamilee Cruz at cruzj15520@gotritons.uog.edu to register.

This workshop is supported, in part, by a grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Food & Agriculture. ***(PR)***

UOG

Horticulturalist Robert Bevacqua of the University of Guam teaches community members about banana propagation at a workshop on Feb. 12, 2022. Bevacqua will be leading a beginning farmers workshop on March 9 focused on growing mulberry, Surinam cherry, eggfruit, and peanut butter fruit trees and uses for their fruits.

NEW MRI CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Guam Regional Medical City announces that its Magnetic Resonance Imaging scan was successfully replaced and is currently operational. After sustaining severe damage from Typhoon Mawar in May 2023, GRMC aimed to repair and refurbish the machine to improve its resiliency during natural calamities and ensure the continuity of care for the island.

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ATTORNEY FOR Plaintiff

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

TRIPLE CROWN LLC, Plaintiff,	]	CIVIL ACTION NO. 23-0371
-v-	]	
TLC ENTERTAINMENT, LLC AND TAKAYUKI NIIZEKI, Defendants.	]	

SUMMONS FOR PUBLICATION

TO TAKAYUKI NIIZEKI, Defendant:

YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED and notified to file any answer you wish to make to the Complaint, a copy of which is served upon you hereby, within twenty-one (21) days after the fourth publication of this Summons, and to deliver or mail a copy of your answer to THE LAW OFFICES OF MICHAEL A. WHITE, LLC, the Plaintiff's attorney, whose address is Post Office Box 5222, Saipan, MP 96950, as soon as practicable after filing your answer or sending it to the Clerk of Courts for filing.

Your answer should be in writing and filed with the Clerk of this Court at Susupe, Saipan. It may be prepared and signed for you by your counsel and sent to the Clerk of this Court by messenger or mail. It is not necessary for you to appear personally until further notice.

If you fail to answer in accordance with this Summons, judgement by default may be taken against you for the relief demanded in the Complaint.

Dated February 22, 2024, by order of the Court:

/s/
Clerk of Court

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Attorney for Administrator Antonio B. Cabrera

IN THE SUPERIOR COURTFOR THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF:	]	Civil Action No.: 23-0042-CV
JOSE CRUZ CONCEPCION, Decedent.	]	**NOTICE OF HEARING**

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that the Petition for Decree of Final Distribution in the aboveentitled matter will be heard before the Honorable Joseph N. Camacho, Associate Judge, on the 29th day of February, 2024, at 10:00 a.m., at Room 220A, NMI Superior Court, Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. All persons interested are hereby notified to appear at the hearing and show cause, if any, why the order should not be made.

Dated 14th this day of February, 2024.

Hon. JOSEPH N. CAMACHO
Associate Judge

NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION

P.O. BOX 500514, Saipan, MP 96950-0514
Email: nmhc@nmhc.gov.mp Website: http://www.cnmi-cdbgdr.com

INVITATION FOR BID (IFB) NMHC IFB 2024-007

(This ad is paid by NMHC by HUD funds)

BID SUBMISSION DATE: March 27, 2024, 2:00 p.m.

Purchase and Installation of Windows and Typhoon Shutters for the NMHC Housing Units in Tinian

Project Package will be available on February 26, 2024, at the NMHC Central Office in Garapan, Saipan, during regular business hours (7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.) Monday thru Friday except CNMI holidays. A non-refundable payment of One-Hundred Dollars ($100.00) is required for each set of the project package. Payment must be made payable to NMHC and receipt of payment must be presented when obtaining the project package at the reception counter.

The provisions on the NMHC Procurement regulations, NMIAC 100-60-725 AND 100-60-730 Prohibiting Gratuities, Kickbacks and Contingent Fees shall apply.

A Mandatory Pre-Bid Conference will be held at the NMHC Field Office in Tinian located at the NMC Campus in Tinian on March 1st, 2024, 10:00 a.m. In addition, a Mandatory site Visit/Inspection of the project site will be conducted immediately after the Pre-Bid Conference. Failure to attend both the Mandatory Pre-bid conference and the Mandatory site Visit/Inspection will be considered a non-responsive bidder.

For more information, contact Mr. Jacob Muna, Office Manager, at (670) 234-9447 or via email at officemanager@nmhcgov.net during business hours, 7:30am – 4:30pm Monday through Friday, except CNMI holidays.

/s/ JESSE S. PALACIOS
Corporate Director

/s/ MERCED "MARCIE" M. TOMOKANE
Chairwoman
NMHC Board of Directors

NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION

Community Development Block Grant – Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) Division
P.O. BOX 500514, Saipan, MP 96950-0514
Email: cnmi-cdbg-dr@nmhcgov.net
Website: http://www.cnmi-cdbgdr.com

PUBLIC NOTICE

For Immediate Release
(February 27, 2024)

"NMHC will also suspend application intake for its CDBG-DR Rehabilitation/Reconstruction Program"

Due to an increased volume of Pre-Qualification application packets received to date and to assess the actual number of applicants that may be able to be assisted as well as the urgency to speed up processing of already submitted grant applications for applicants determined eligible for financial assistance, the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC) is notifying the general public that it will also **SUSPEND** accepting new applications for its CDBG-DR Rehabilitation/Reconstruction program effective March 1, 2024.

Depending on the number of grant applications approved and subject to funding availability, NMHC may resume application intake.

Thank you and for more information, please contact NMHC CDBG-DR Division at Tel. Nos. 233-9447/9448/9449/9450 or via email cnmi-cdbg-dr@nmhcgov.net

"NMHC is an equal employment and fair housing public agency"

UOG professor leads efforts to document little-known wartime past of Chuuk Lagoon

The remnants of World War II echo deep throughout the Pacific, and that's no truer than in Chuuk Lagoon, where dozens of Japanese military ships have met their watery graves. Nearly 7,000 tons of ammunition were dropped onto Chuuk over 18 months, during U.S. bombings that began in February 1944. At least 50 to 60 major ships were sunk in the lagoon, and more than 5,000 Japanese and 1,000 Chuukese died.

Today, shipwrecks are a major attraction for Chuuk, drawing in tourists and researchers alike. But having been a significant military base for Japanese forces in the Pacific, there is more to the story of World War II in Chuuk than what can be found underwater.

A team led by Dr. William Jeffery, associate professor of Archaeology and Micronesian Studies at the University of Guam, is hoping to shed light on underrepresented stories and sites at Chuuk Lagoon and develop a more comprehensive view of the war in this area. Tonoas, an island in the lagoon, served as the wartime headquarters of the Japanese in Chuuk. This is where Jeffery has been concentrating his focus.

"The war remains are not just shipwrecks. There are all these other sites on Tonoas. It was heavily bombed. It had a submarine base. It had a seaplane base," Jeffery said. The island had a small town of about 800 people, he added.

Several outcomes are planned for the project, including tourism aspects, such as developing signs for certain sites, informative content for online, and a brochure. Click here to see a video of the project https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PcteUfP46Vg.

"The other thing we're doing on Tonoas, which is very significant, is that the war and the bombings bombed traditional Indigenous sites on Chuuk and had a big impact on traditional cultural heritage. So, we want to bring that out," Jeffery said.

Further project outcomes include developing training programs for Tonoas residents employed as tour guides and for prospective employment in historical site preservation and diving.

Jeffery also wants to connect with students from Chuuk, including those attending the UOG, as part of raising awareness about relics that serve as reminders about how the locals were affected during the war.

The project includes efforts to survey three new shipwrecks, and to document marine biology at these sites and other shipwrecks.

The project is funded through a grant from the American Battlefield Protection Program. UOG obtained the grant in 2021, but the COVID-19 pandemic delayed work on the project. A three-week survey was conducted in July 2023.

"The University of Guam is committed to advancing research that delivers public value," said Dr. Anita Borja Enriquez, UOG president. "Dr. Jeffery's research illuminates some of the untold stories of our region's history and fosters a deeper understanding of the Pacific's wartime past and its lasting impact on Micronesia."

Also supporting the project from UOG are Dr. David Atienza, professor of Anthropology, and Dr. Peter Houk, professor at the Marine Lab who is advising on marine biology. Participating from outside the university are Maria Kottermair, a geographic information systems specialist; Kalle Applegate-Palmer, a marine biologist; photographer Greg Adams; and Hiroshi Ishii, a Japanese maritime archeologist.

Other partners include the Tonoas mayor's office, members of that community in Chuuk, and staff from the Chuuk Historic Preservation Office. ***(PR)***

GREG ADAMS

The entrance to the Chuuk Hospital on Tonoas island, in Chuuk, built by the Japanese in 1928. During World War II, the Imperial Japanese Army used it as a hospital for their personnel.

HIROSHI ISHII

Team members who surveyed wartime relics on Tonoas island, formerly called Natsushima during Japanese times. From left, Maria Kottermair, geographic information systems specialist; Greg Adams, photographer; and Dr. David Atienza, UOG professor of Anthropology. They are seen at the entrance to the 120-meter-long bunker that Japanese communications used for operations during World War II.

STANSON STANLEY

A team that visited traditional Indigenous sites on Tonoas island in Chuuk on July 4, 2023, is joined by traditional chiefs of Tonoas; Mayor Gradvin Aisek, right of center, wearing a hat; and some of the Chuuk Lagoon Battlefield Project survey team members from the University of Guam. They are seen in front of the Tonoas Municipal Office, formerly a school built for Chuukese students before World War II.

UOG

Dr. William Jeffery, associate professor at the University of Guam, is leading a research project to shed light on underrepresented World War II stories and sites at the Chuuk Lagoon.

GREG ADAMS

A view of Etten island, called Takeshima during Japanese times, from a drone. Much of the island is reclaimed land, built and used as an airstrip during World War II. The long straight coastline is a wall built up with basalt rocks. Coconut trees were planted after the war, as part of developing a copra industry.

HIROSHI ISHII

Kalle Applegate-Palmer, in pink fins, and Chioshy Topias survey the *Heian Maru* shipwreck in July 2023. Palmer is a marine ecologist and Topias is with the Chuuk Historic Preservation Office.

GREG ADAMS

This is one of two anti-aircraft guns placed in eastern Tonoas island. Inspecting the gun is Ranger Walter, Chuuk Historic Preservation officer, and technical assistant Stanson Stanley.

World

What would new Palestinian gov't in West Bank mean for Gaza?

By JOSEPH KRAUSS
Associated Press

The Palestinian Authority's prime minister announced his government's resignation on Monday, seen as the first step in a reform process urged by the United States as part of its latest ambitious plans to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

But it will do little to address the authority's longstanding lack of legitimacy among its own people or its strained relations with Israel. Both pose major obstacles to U.S. plans calling for the PA, which administers parts of the Israeli-occupied West Bank, to govern postwar Gaza ahead of eventual statehood.

That's assuming that the war in Gaza ends with the defeat of the Hamas militant group—an Israeli and U.S. goal that seems elusive nearly five months into the grueling war that has killed almost 30,000 Palestinians and pushed the territory to the brink of famine.

Here's a look at the government shakeup and what it means for the Israel-Hamas war.

The PA was created in the early 1990s through interim peace agreements signed between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, then led by Yasser Arafat.

It was granted limited autonomy in parts of the West Bank and Gaza ahead of what the Palestinians hoped would be full statehood in both territories as well as east Jerusalem, lands that Israel captured in the 1967 Mideast war.

But the sides were unable to reach a final agreement through several rounds of peace talks. Mahmoud Abbas was elected president of the PA in 2005, months after Arafat's death. Hamas won a landslide victory in parliamentary elections the following year, triggering an international boycott of the PA.

A power struggle between Abbas' secular Fatah party and Hamas boiled over in the summer of 2007, with Hamas seizing power in Gaza after a week of street battles. That effectively confined Abbas' authority to parts of the Israeli-occupied West Bank.

Abbas recognizes Israel, is opposed to armed struggle and is committed to a two-state solution. His security forces have cooperated with the Israeli military to crack down on Hamas and other armed groups, and his government has worked with Israel to facilitate work permits, medical travel and other civilian affairs.

WORLD BRIEFS

US, British strikes on Houthi sites in Yemen answer militants' surge in Red Sea attacks on ships

WASHINGTON (AP)—The U.S. and Britain struck 18 Houthi targets in Yemen, answering a recent surge in attacks by the Iran-backed militia group on ships in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden, including a missile strike this past week that set fire to a cargo vessel. According to U.S. officials, American and British fighter jets on Saturday hit sites in eight locations, targeting missiles, launchers, rockets, drones and air defense systems. The officials spoke on condition of anonymity in order to provide early details of an ongoing military operation. This is the fourth time that the U.S. and British militaries have conducted a combined operation against the Houthis since Jan. 12.

Supporters of Brazil's Bolsonaro stage huge demonstration to defend him amid investigations

SAO PAULO (AP)—Supporters of former President Jair Bolsonaro staged a huge rally jamming a main avenue in Brazil's biggest city Sunday to defend him against legal challenges that could put him in jail. The far-right leader said in a speech that he seeks "pacification to erase the past," taking a more conciliatory tone than when he was in office. Bolsonaro is seeking to show his base is resilient as he is being investigated by federal police over his alleged role in the Jan. 8, 2023, attacks on government buildings by his supporters over his election loss. He wants the dozens of people still in jail for those incidents to get pardons. Bolsonaro is also accused of illegally receiving jewels from Saudi Arabia during his presidency. His supporters filled blocks of the city's Paulista Avenue. Independent observers from a research group at the University of Sao Paulo estimated 185,000 people joined in. Brazil's military police put the crowd size even bigger.

Many of the participants complained Bolsonaro is being persecuted by Brazil's Supreme Court and claimed President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva unfairly won his narrow victory in the 2022 election.

Seoul gives young doctors 4 days to end walkouts, threatening suspended licenses and prosecutions

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—Junior doctors in South Korea have four days to end their walkouts or they will have their medical licenses suspended and face prosecution, the government said Monday. About 9,000 medical interns and residents have stayed off the job since early last week to protest a government plan to increase medical school admissions by about 65%. The walkouts have severely hurt the operations of their hospitals, with numerous cancellations of surgeries and other treatments. Government officials say adding more doctors is necessary to deal with South Korea's rapidly aging population. The country's current doctor-to-patient ratio is among the lowest in the developed world. The strikers say universities can't handle so many new students and argue the plan would not resolve a chronic shortage of doctors in some key but low-paying areas like pediatrics and emergency departments. Vice Health Minister Park Min-soo said during a televised briefing Monday that the government won't seek any disciplinary action against striking doctors if they return to work by Thursday. "We want them to return to work by the end of this month, Feb. 29. If they return to the hospitals they had left by then, we won't hold them responsible" for any damage caused by their walkouts, Park said. "It's not too late. Please, return to patients immediately."

Zelenskyy: 31K Ukrainian troops killed since start of Russia's full-scale invasion

KYIV, Ukraine (AP)—Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said Sunday that 31,000 Ukrainian soldiers have been killed in action in the two years since Russia launched its full-scale invasion.

Zelenskyy said that the number was far lower than estimates given by Russian President Vladimir Putin's government.

"31,000 Ukrainian military personnel have been killed in this war. Not 300,000, not 150,000, not whatever Putin and his deceitful circle have been lying about. But nevertheless, each of these losses is a great sacrifice for us", Zelenskyy said at the "Ukraine. Year 2024" forum in Kyiv.

The Ukrainian leader said that he wouldn't disclose the number of troops that were wounded or missing. He also said that "tens of thousands of civilians" had been killed in occupied areas of Ukraine, but said that no exact figures would be available until the war was over.

"We don't know how many of our civilians they killed. We don't," he said.

It's the first time that Kyiv has confirmed the number of its losses since the start of Russia's full-scale war on Feb. 24, 2022.

Russia has provided few official casualty figures. The most recent data from the Defense Ministry, published in January 2023, pointed to just over 6,000 deaths, although reports from U.S. and U.K. officials put that number significantly higher.

A U.S. intelligence report declassified in mid-December 2023 estimated that 315,000 Russian troops had been killed or wounded in Ukraine. If accurate, the figure would represent 87% of the roughly 360,000 troops Russia had before the war, according to the report.

Independent Russian news outlet Mediazona said Saturday that about 75,000 Russian men died in 2022 and 2023 fighting in the war.

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Life & Style

‘Oppenheimer’ keeps devouring awards with top prize at Producers Guild

BEVERLY HILLS, Calif. (AP)—With two weeks to go before the Oscars, “Oppenheimer” looks unstoppable.

Director and producer Christopher Nolan’s tale of the life of J. Robert Oppenheimer and the birth of the atomic age won the top prize Sunday at the 35th Producers Guild of America Awards—a frequent predictor of Oscar best picture winners—the night after doing the same at the Screen Actors Guild Awards.

“Oppenheimer” won the PGA’s Darryl F. Zanuck Award for Outstanding Producer of Theatrical Motion Pictures over the exact same set of 10 nominees up for best picture at the March 10 Academy Awards, including “ Barbie,” “ Poor Things “ and “ Killers of the Flower Moon,” whose director, Martin Scorsese, was honored Sunday for his concurrent career as a producer.

AP

Cillian Murphy, from left, Emily Blunt, and Robert Downey Jr. arrive at the 35th Annual Producers Guild Awards on Sunday, Feb. 25, 2024, at The Ray Dolby Ballroom in Los Angeles.

The Zanuck Award winner has gone on to take the best picture Oscar for five of the past six years, and 12 of the past 15, including last year with “ Everything, Everywhere All at Once.”

From the stage at the Ray Dolby Ballroom in Hollywood, in the same complex where the Academy Awards will be held at the Dolby Theatre, Nolan thanked his fellow producer Charles Royen for giving him “American Prometheus,” the book that led to “Oppenheimer,” and “starting a chain reaction that’s spread all over the world.”

Earlier in the show, Robert Downey Jr. called it “the highest-grossing film about theoretical physics yet made.”

Downey on Saturday won best supporting actor at the SAG Awards, where “Oppenheimer” also won best ensemble, part of an awards season sweep that also included wins at the Golden Globes and Directors Guild Awards.

“Succession” and “ The Bear “ took the top television prizes at the PGA Awards after doing the same at the SAG Awards and last month’s Emmy Awards.

“ Spider-Man: Across the Spider-Verse,” nominated for the animated feature Oscar, won the PGA’s animated motion picture award. Its predecessor, “Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse,” won the PGA award in 2019 before going on to win the Academy Award.

Scorsese joined Tom Cruise, Steven Spielberg and Kevin Feige as winners of the David O. Selznick award for an outstanding body of work as a producer of motion pictures.

Scorsese said the first film he remembers seeing, at age 4, was the Selznick written and produced “Duel in the Sun.”

“It was condemned by the Catholic church, and my mother wanted to see it,” Scorsese told the audience. “She said, ‘The kid likes westerns, I’m taking him.’”

Scorsese said “the very first impact of classic Hollywood cinema starts right there for me. Slashes of color, movement, the landscapes, stunning set pieces.”

He called them “Proustian sense memories” of early cinema.

“I was frightened by them,” he said, “and thrilled.”

SHOWBIZ TIDBITS

Alec Baldwin to stand trial this summer on a charge stemming from ‘Rust’ movie set shooting

SANTA FE, N.M. (AP)—A New Mexico judge has set a trial date for Alec Baldwin on an involuntary manslaughter charge stemming from the 2021 deadly shooting on the set of the Western movie “Rust.” The scheduling order entered Monday calls for jury selection to begin July 9, with the trial starting the following day with opening statements by special prosecutors and Baldwin’s defense attorneys. The proceedings are expected to last eight days. Baldwin, the lead actor and a co-producer on the film, pleaded not guilty in January, the day before he was scheduled to be arraigned. A grand jury had indicted him after prosecutors received a new analysis of the revolver he was using during filming, renewing a charge that prosecutors originally filed and then dismissed in April 2023.

George Michael is honored with a commemorative minting

LONDON (AP)—You gotta have more than “Faith” to pocket the new George Michael coin.

A commemorative minting of coins that rolled out on Monday ranged in price from a couple of banknotes to a small fortune as the late musician continues to rack up posthumous honors years after his death. A silver-colored version stamped by the Royal Mint with Michael’s likeness in trademark aviator-style sunglasses, complete with his blow-dried locks and razor stubble he sported in the video for “Faith” starts at 15.50 pounds ($19.66) and rises as high as 5,305 pounds ($6,728) for a limited edition 2 ounce (56 gram) gold coin. Michael, who died in 2016 at 53, had a banner year in 2023. Last summer, Netflix released “WHAM!”, a well-received documentary about the pop musical duo Michael started with Andrew Ridgeley.

Musicians’ muse Pattie Boyd auctions love letters from Eric Clapton and George Harrison

LONDON (AP)—Love letters to Pattie Boyd from both George Harrison and Eric Clapton are going up for sale at Christie’s auction house, alongside clothing, jewelry and other memorabilia from the renowned model and musicians’ muse. Boyd, who was previously married both to Beatle Harrison and to guitar legend Clapton, is selling a trove of items from her time at the epicenter of the 1960s and 70s counterculture, Christie’s announced Monday. For Boyd, Harrison wrote “Something,” one of the Fab Four’s most-covered tunes. Clapton’s passion for his friend’s wife inspired the scorching “Layla.” Later, when Boyd had left Harrison and married Clapton, he serenaded her with “Wonderful Tonight.”

Music producer latest to accuse Sean ‘Diddy’ Combs of sexual misconduct

NEW YORK (AP)—Sean “Diddy” Combs was sued Monday by a music producer who accused the hip-hop mogul of sexually assaulting him and forcing him to have sex with prostitutes. The suit, filed in federal court in New York, accuses Combs of repeated instances of unsolicited groping and sexual touching. It also says the man had to work in a bathroom while Combs showered and walked around naked. A lawyer for Combs called the events described in the lawsuit “pure fiction.” In the lawsuit, the producer claims Combs made him solicit prostitutes and pressured him to have sex with them. It also described a time when the producer woke up in bed with two sex workers, suspecting he had been drugged.

In-laws keep spouses off family-only text thread

DEAR ABBY: I recently married and was excited to be part of my husband’s family. My own siblings and I are not particularly close. During COVID, one of my husband’s sisters started a family text chain in which they share what’s happening in their lives. I thought it was a great idea.

Not technically being a family member yet, I understood why I wasn’t included in the thread. But after our wedding, I wasn’t added to the chain. Come to find out, none of the spouses are included. I have also learned from my husband that his mother really had no use for any of her kids’ spouses, because technically “we are not one of THEM.”

They aren’t sharing earth-shattering information with one another. It’s normally fun stuff or things their kids are up to, etc. It is very hurtful that I’m not included. I have to hear everything secondhand from my husband.

Am I wrong to feel this way? I asked him to add me to the list and he tried, but he couldn’t. Instead of pursuing it with his sister, he just dropped it. I have asked him several times to see what he can do, to no avail. I feel like he doesn’t have my back. Your advice?

LEFT OUT IN FLORIDA

DEAR LEFT OUT: Your husband doesn’t have enough power in his family to do what you have been requesting, which is regrettable. Rather than pout, consider starting a text chain of your own, comprising of all the outcasts who have been excluded from the “our bloodline and nobody else” chain. It might be fun, and you may find it’s a club that is welcoming and has some interesting things to say.

■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: My wife of 26 years is having an affair with another (married) man. We have teenage kids and so does he. She has been having him over and meeting him out for the last four months. The kids have noticed how she takes off in the middle of the day for hours to do a “solo hike.” Several times, my teenage daughter has called me at work, frantic, saying Mom is not answering either of her phones and was supposed to pick her up at the agreed-upon location.

My wife claims to love us both and wants to continue both relationships. For our family’s sake, it is sad that this has happened. He is the manager of a local business, and I encounter him from time to time. I want to ask him how he thinks this is OK. What should I do?

SHARING HER IN MASSACHUSETTS

DEAR SHARING HER: Make up your mind about what kind of a marriage you want. If it’s what you are experiencing now, do nothing. However, if it isn’t, tell your wandering wife she must end the affair now. Offer her the option of counseling to see if you can get your marriage back on track.

Instead of talking with the man she’s having the fling with, tell HIS WIFE what has been happening if she’s unaware. That your wife is so irresponsible she would leave her daughter stranded while she’s “hiking” is disgraceful. If your wife refuses counseling, contact an attorney.

■ ■ ■

To receive a collection of Abby’s most memorable – and most frequently requested – poems and essays, send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby – Keepers Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

DEAR ABBY

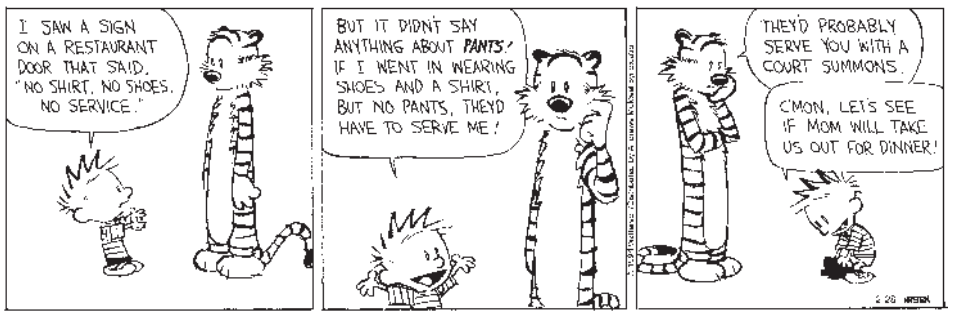
By Abigail Van Buren
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Pastimes

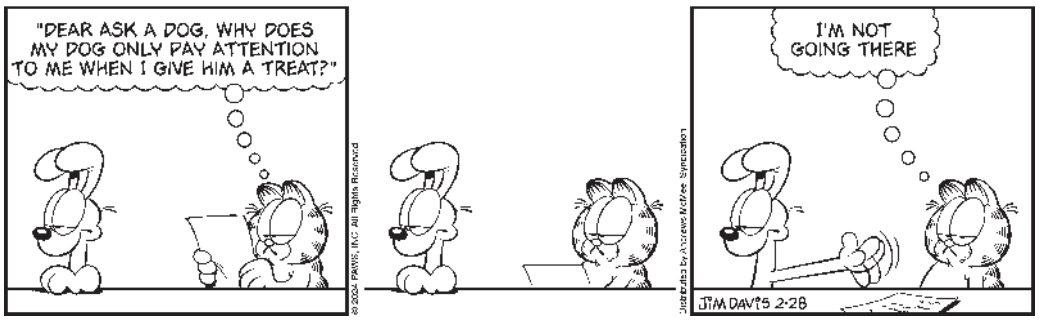
Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson


I SAW A SIGN ON A RESTAURANT DOOR THAT SAID, "NO SHIRT, NO SHOES, NO SERVICE."
BUT IT DIDN'T SAY ANYTHING ABOUT PANTS! IF I WENT IN WEARING SHOES AND A SHIRT, BUT NO PANTS, THEY'D HAVE TO SERVE ME!
THEY'D PROBABLY SERVE YOU WITH A COURT SUMMONS.
C'MON, LET'S SEE IF MOM WILL TAKE US OUT FOR DINNER!

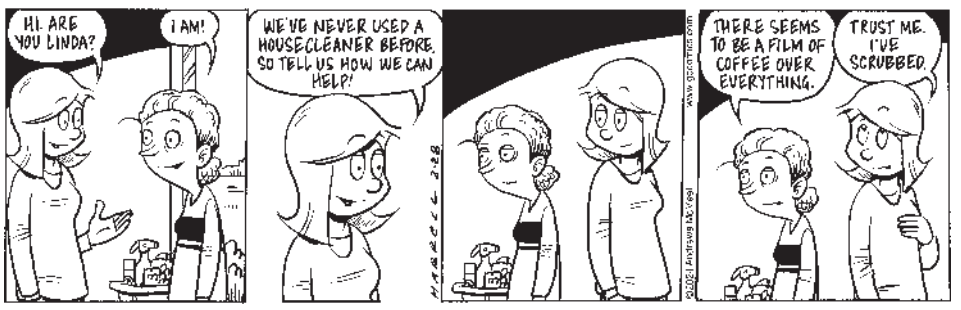
Garfield®

By Jim Davis



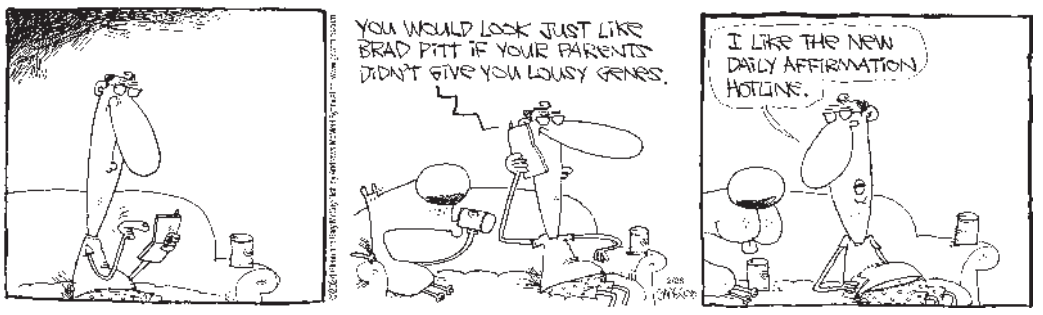
Adam@home

By Bryan Basset


HI. ARE YOU LINDA?
I AM!
WE'VE NEVER USED A HOUSECLEANER BEFORE. SO TELL US HOW WE CAN HELP!
THERE SEEMS TO BE A FILM OF COFFEE OVER EVERYTHING.
TRUST ME. I'VE SCRUBBED.

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

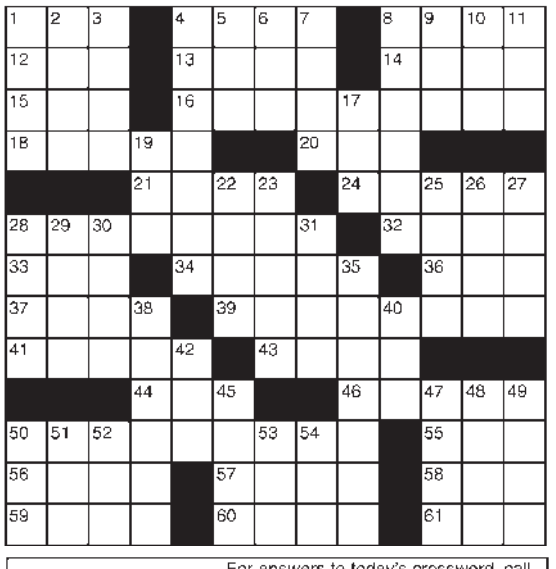
ACROSS
1 With it, once
4 Castle defense
8 Viral phenomenon
12 Jurist Lance
13 Designer Gucci
14 Exam format
15 Holy Fr. woman
16 Misdirected
18 "Poison" shrub
20 Homer's lament
21 Floor cleaners
24 Jazz genre
28 Pro bono service
32 Wander
33 Rowing tool
34 Thousand, in France
36 Lincoln or Ford
37 Forehead
39 Undefeated boxer nicknamed "Madame Butterfly"
41 "Enigma Variations" composer
43 Missile shelter
44 Pen filler
46 "As — and breathe!"
50 Tibetan terrier
55 Tic-tac-toe win
56 Sunrise direction
57 Endure
58 Victory
59 Lodge members
60 Way out
61 Billboards

DOWN
1 Radiator sound
2 Words to Brutus
3 Wordsworth work
4 "Outliers" author Gladwell
5 Flamenco cheer
6 Put two and two together?
7 Frog's kin
8 Beyonce, to Blue Ivy
9 Blunder
10 Goat's cry
11 TV Tarzan Ron
17 Cry
19 Docs' org.
22 Sandbox toy
23 George Eliot's Marner
25 — Raton
26 Cameo shape
27 Actress Gilpin
28 Earring site
29 Hoops great Monroe
30 Pirate's drink
31 552, in old Rome
35 Rapper Missy
38 Belted areas
40 "You've got mail" co.
42 Genetic letters
45 Curly cabbage
47 Corn Belt state
48 Nullify
49 Eternities
50 Golfer Trevino
51 "2001" computer
52 Request
53 Peace, to Caesar
54 Govt. stipend

Solution time: 23 mins.

W	I	L	L	■	A	H	A	B	■	C	A	N
E	L	B	A	■	F	A	D	E	■	A	M	O
B	L	O	W	H	A	R	D	S	■	M	A	E
■	■	■	M	A	R	K	■	T	W	I	L	L
S	O	F	A	S	■	■	■	C	W	S	■	■
O	V	E	N	■	G	L	O	W	W	O	R	M
W	A	R	■	S	E	E	M	S	■	L	A	O
S	L	O	W	C	L	A	P	■	I	E	N	S
■	■	C	O	O	S	■	■	T	E	S	T	S
R	R	I	F	F	■	K	A	L	F	■	■	■
O	O	O	■	T	I	O	W	C	H	A	R	T
E	A	U	■	A	O	N	E	■	A	R	I	D
R	R	S	■	T	O	A	D	■	W	A	D	S

Yesterday's answer 2-28



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call 1-900-226-5955! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Jason Aldean, 47; Ali Larter, 48; Eric Lindros, 51; Pat Monahan, 55.

Happy Birthday: Pay attention, study directions and make moves. Choose to be patient, tolerant, loving and kind. Don't let temptation and anger set the stage for what's to come. Discipline, desire, innovative ideas and a willingness to try something new will lead to better results and new possibilities. Don't let the past or negativity consume you when forward-thinking and positivity are the answer. Your numbers are 9, 16, 19, 24, 32, 41, 43.

ARIES *(March 21-April 19)*: Don't venture outside your comfort zone. Trust your instincts and use your skills to get you where you want. Stick to the rules to avoid interference from institutions or authority figures. When in doubt, call an expert. Don't give in to temptation. ✪✪✪

TAURUS *(April 20-May 20)*: Get your facts straight before you make a move or share your thoughts. Protect against interference or taking a risk that can affect your health or financial well-being. A change may be necessary if you want someone to endorse your plans. ✪✪✪

GEMINI *(May 21-June 20)*: Keep moving. Don't look back or let anyone talk you out of what you want to pursue. The less you share with others, the easier it will be to forge ahead without interference. Don't rely on hearsay; get quotes in writing. ✪✪✪✪

CANCER *(June 21-July 22)*: Learn something new and exciting. Traveling, conferences, reunions and exploring something that interests you will lead to new beginnings. Let your imagination wander and incorporate what you discover into something you enjoy doing. An unusual offer will grab your attention. ✪✪

LEO *(July 23-Aug. 22)*: Find a quiet workplace. Taking care of responsibilities will ease your mind. Refuse to let anyone interfere or ridicule you for the decisions you make. Live life your way and associate with those who give you the freedom you need to be successful. ✪✪✪✪

VIRGO *(Aug. 23-Sept. 22)*: Don't make premature decisions, regardless of the temptation or prompting you encounter. Take your time. When the right offer comes along, you will know. For now, enjoy and be grateful for what you have and spend time with loved ones. ✪✪✪

LIBRA *(Sept. 23-Oct. 22)*: If you snooze, you lose. Make strength and vitality your priorities and participation a path to knowledge, accessibility and worthwhile connections. Choose fitness, health and romance over poor behavior. ✪✪✪

SCORPIO *(Oct. 23-Nov. 21)*: Keep a low profile. Focus on what you know, do your best and stay close to home. Consider changes that make life easier and incorporate something into your daily routine that strengthens you mentally, emotionally and financially. ✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS *(Nov. 22-Dec. 21)*: Be subtle in order to avoid a dispute. Go about your business, work alone and avoid anything that requires you to share expenses. A heartfelt presentation based on what you do best will bring out the best in you. ✪✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN *(Dec. 22-Jan. 19)*: Fix up your surroundings. Having a functional workspace and being ready to go will encourage you to finish things on time. Refuse to let emotions get in your way. Don't ignore issues. Take a stance, speak your mind and forge ahead. ✪✪

AQUARIUS *(Jan. 20-Feb. 18)*: Control emotions, choose a healthy lifestyle and excel. Design a routine that will help you stay in shape without breaking your budget. Use your energy to get ahead; make adjustments to help you stand out, and do your best to reach your goals. ✪✪✪✪✪

PISCES *(Feb. 19-March 20)*: Don't give up before you get started. Where there's a will, there's a way; follow the path most promising. Use your attributes and embrace change; the outcome will be substantially better than anticipated. Simple, effective and complete are the goals. ✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are dedicated, helpful and straightforward. You are unique and curious.

✪: Avoid conflicts; work behind the scenes. ✪✪: You can accomplish, but don't rely on others. ✪✪✪: Focus and you'll reach your goals. ✪✪✪✪: Aim high; start new projects. ✪✪✪✪✪: Nothing can stop you; go for gold.

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

	5	2		7			3	
	7		9	3		5		
8	6				5			
		7		8			6	
3			1			7	5	
		9				2	4	
	3		8		7	6		
			6		1		2	3
6				9	2	8		

Difficulty: ★★★ 2/28

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's Answer

7	4	8	2	1	6	5	3	9
9	5	1	8	3	7	2	6	4
3	2	6	4	9	5	7	8	1
5	3	4	6	2	9	8	1	7
6	8	9	1	7	3	4	5	2
2	1	7	5	4	8	3	9	6
4	6	5	9	8	2	1	7	3
8	7	2	3	6	1	9	4	5
1	9	3	7	5	4	6	2	8

Difficulty: ★★ 2/27

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WONDERWORD

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the WONDERWORD.

BANANA RECIPES Solution: 9 letters

B	D	C	H	E	E	S	E	C	A	K	E	S	E	S
R	R	A	A	R	U	P	M	E	T	R	O	A	S	T
F	U	E	I	D	F	L	A	P	J	A	C	K	S	E
L	P	O	A	Q	M	I	A	F	R	I	E	D	U	N
A	O	E	L	K	U	T	R	E	C	I	U	J	O	G
M	R	M	U	F	F	I	N	S	M	O	C	S	M	I
B	R	E	O	S	T	A	R	T	B	T	E	I	S	E
E	I	Y	K	T	O	F	S	I	O	K	A	T	N	B
Z	D	R	E	A	S	R	M	T	A	F	A	O	L	G
E	G	R	I	L	C	A	R	C	T	E	E	L	H	N
E	E	U	I	P	E	P	N	U	R	I	I	E	B	I
R	C	C	E	R	E	A	U	T	H	R	K	E	O	D
F	E	U	C	S	P	I	N	C	G	C	O	P	W	D
D	P	L	A	N	T	A	I	N	S	Ⓑ	Ⓞ	Ⓘ	Ⓛ	U
G	N	I	T	S	O	R	F	K	E	T	C	H	U	P

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Beignets, Boat, Boil, Bowl, Bread, Breakfast, Cheesecake, Churros, Cookie, Cream, Cupcake, Curry, Daiquiri, Flambé, Flapjacks, Flour, Freeze, Fried, Fritter, Frosting, Grill, Icing, Juice, Ketchup, Loaf, Mousse, Muffins, Oatmeal, Pancakes, Parfait, Peel, Plantain, Porridge, Pudding, Ripe, Roast, Sauce, Sliced, Spin, Split, Tempura, Treats

Yesterday's Answer: Lenience

The NEW Wonderword Grand Millennium #1 in LARGE PRINT is now available at: www.WonderWordBooks.com or call 1-800-642-6480. (In Canada, call 1-855-232-2367)

Short-handed Heat beat Kings, 121-110, for 4th straight win

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (AP)—Bam Adebayo scored 28 points, Jaime Jaquez Jr. added 26 and the short-handed Miami Heat beat the Sacramento Kings 121-110 on Monday night for their fourth straight win.

Kevin Love provided a big spark with 19 points off the bench and Caleb Martin scored 16 for the Heat, who were missing three starters because of injuries or suspensions—including star Jimmy Butler.

"When you're missing a guy like that, everybody has to step up," Jaquez said. "He's such a big part of our team and missing him is something that we obviously feel. But no matter, we've still got to play a game. Guys have to step up and we want to do it for those guys."

Sacramento's Domantas Sabonis had 14 points, 14 rebounds and 10 assists for his NBA-high 21st triple-double of the season. Sabonis also became the 10th player in league history with 40 straight double-doubles in a season.

Keegan Murray scored 28 points and De'Aaron Fox added 27 for Sacramento, but the Kings were unable to build on a big road win against the Los Angeles Clippers on Sunday and had their three-game winning streak snapped.

"They came here and they played well both offensively and defensively," Fox said. "We have to be better. I can't turn the ball over like I did. But it's not like they didn't come in here and make tough shots."

The key absences led to Miami's 30th different starting lineup in the 57th game of the season. Butler, Nikola Jovic and Thomas Bryant served suspensions for their role in a fight Friday night at New Orleans. Tyler Herro (left knee), Terry Rozier (right knee), Josh Richardson (right shoulder) and Orlando Robinson (back) were out with injuries.

But that didn't derail the Heat, who got plenty of contributions from unheralded players like Delon Wright, who scored 13 points in his Miami debut, and reserve Haywood Highsmith, who scored all 15 of his points in the first half.

The Heat withstood a 20-4 run by Sacramento spanning the first-quarter break to take a 65-62 halftime lead and just built from there.

Love scored 10 points during a 17-2 run to end the third quarter with Miami ahead 101-81.

"He just allowed us to kind of go retro Kevin Love, where we were just running our offense through him," coach Erik Spoelstra said. "He's so clever, physical, smart. For short stretches he's every bit as good as he was and you saw that tonight."

The Kings tried to mount a comeback, getting one 3-pointer from Kevin Huerter and two from Murray in less than a minute to spark a 14-1 run that cut the deficit to six midway through the fourth on a floater by Fox.

Sacramento got as close as two points on a layup by Fox with 3:41 left, but back-to-back baskets from Jaquez helped hold off the Kings.

"That's what this group is about," Spoelstra said. "It really became so much less about anything in the huddle or coaching. Just use your competitive spirit and figure out how to win this game."

AP

Miami Heat center Bam Adebayo scores in the first quarter of an NBA basketball game against the Sacramento Kings in Sacramento, Calif., Monday, Feb. 26, 2024.

KNICKS 113, PISTONS 111

NEW YORK (AP)—Josh Hart made the go-ahead basket with 2.8 seconds left after a chaotic possession, and the New York Knicks beat the Detroit Pistons 113-111 on Monday night.

Jalen Brunson had 35 points and 12 assists for the Knicks, and it was his missed 3-point attempt with 20 seconds remaining that started the wild back-and-forth that led to Hart's basket.

Detroit's Ausur Thompson stole a pass by Donte DiVincenzo. But Thompson then lost the ball during a collision along the sideline, the Knicks came up with it and Brunson found Hart under the basket for his layup.

Hart added 23 points and DiVincenzo had 21 for the Knicks, who beat the Pistons for the 14th straight time.

Cade Cunningham scored 32 points and Jalen Duren had 11 points and 16 rebounds for Detroit.

RAPTORS 130, PACERS 122

INDIANAPOLIS (AP)—All-Star Scottie Barnes had 21 points, 12 rebounds and 12 assists for his fourth triple-double of the season and Toronto beat Indianapolis.

RJ Barrett scored 24 points for the Raptors. Rookie Gradey Dick added 18 points and matched his season high with four 3-pointers for Toronto, which won its third straight.

Bennedict Mathurin matched his career high with 34 points for the Pacers. Pascal Siakam had 27 points, nine rebounds and six assists against his former team. But All-Star Tyrese Haliburton struggled for Indiana, finishing with nine points.

NETS 111, GRIZZLIES 86

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (AP)—Dennis Schroder scored 18 points, Dorian Finney-Smith added 13 points and nine rebounds, and Brooklyn beat Memphis, giving Kevin Ollie his first win as an NBA coach.

Cam Thomas had 14 points before leaving the game with 7:23 remaining with a right ankle injury. Lonnie Walker IV added 13 for the Nets.

Lamar Stevens scored 17 points on 8-of-9 shooting for the Grizzlies, and Jaren Jackson Jr. scored 15 while going 2 of 12 from the field. GG Jackson had an even worse night, making one of his 13 shots, and Memphis shot 38.7% overall.

Ollie improved to 1-2 since being named Brooklyn's interim coach, replacing the fired Jacque Vaughn.

Refs admit they missed foul on what Pistons coach Monty Williams says was 'worst call of the season'

NEW YORK (AP)—Monty Williams walked all the way across the court from the Pistons bench to the opposite sideline, yelling at an official where he insisted a foul was missed.

"The absolute worst call of the season," Detroit's coach said later.

He was right: There should have been a foul called when New York's Donte DiVincenzo crashed into Pistons rookie Ausur Thompson's legs on the chaotic final possession that gave the Knicks a 113-111 victory on Monday night.

"Upon postgame review, we determined that Thompson gets to the ball first, and then was deprived of the opportunity to gain possession of the ball," crew chief James Williams said. "Therefore, a loose-ball foul should have been whistled on New York's Donte DiVincenzo."

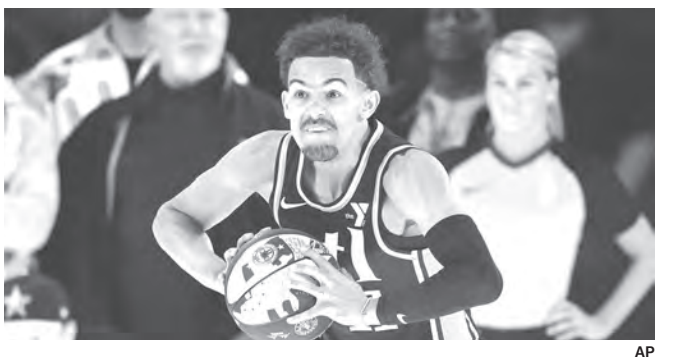
By then, Williams had ripped the officials in remarks that lasted just over a minute.

"We're sick of hearing the same stuff over and over again," Williams said. "We had a chance to win the game and a guy dove into Ausur's legs and there was a no-call. That's an abomination. You cannot miss that in an NBA game. Period."

Once Thompson lost control of the ball, DiVincenzo regained it and the Knicks got it to Josh Hart, who made the go-ahead basket with 2.8 seconds remaining.

"That situation is Exhibit A to what we've been dealing with all season long and enough's enough," Williams said. "You cannot dive into a guy's legs in a big-time game like that and there be a no-call. It's ridiculous and we're tired of it. We just want a fair game called. Period. And I've got nothing else to say. We want a fair game and that was not fair. I'm done."

Hawks lose Trae Young for at least four weeks with torn ligament in left pinkie



AP

Atlanta Hawks' Trae Young makes a pass during the skills challenge at the NBA basketball All-Star weekend, Saturday, Feb. 17, 2024, in Indianapolis.

ATLANTA (AP)—The Atlanta Hawks have lost All-Star point guard Trae Young for at least four weeks with a torn ligament in his left pinkie finger.

The Hawks announced the injury Sunday. Young was hurt during Friday night's loss to Toronto and will have surgery Tuesday at the Hospital for Special Surgery in New York.

The team said Young will be evaluated in four weeks.

"You feel awful for Trae more than anything," Hawks coach Quin Snyder said. "It is going to be a challenge for him not to be out there."

The loss of Young comes as the Hawks, fighting for the final play-in spot in the Eastern Conference, are facing front-line depth issues as center Onyeka Okongwu recovers from a sprained left toe. Snyder said Thursday that Okongwu is not going to be available for the foreseeable future.

"You have to adapt," Snyder said. "That happened when we lost Jalen (Johnson). We have to have minutes from Kobe (Bufkin) and Patty (Mills) and we obviously know what (Dejounte Murray) can do. I don't want to wallow in anything."

The Hawks entered Sunday 2-3 in games Young has missed this season.

Young, who made his third All-Star team this year, leads Atlanta with his averages of 26.4 points and 10.8 assists per game. Murray likely will assume primary ball-handling duties with Young sidelined, and Bogdan Bogdanovic took Young's spot in the starting lineup for Sunday night's game against Orlando. In 46 games as a reserve, Bogdanovic is averaging 16.8 points.

"This will be fluid. If Boji starts, we lose his punch off the bench," Snyder said. "Do you want him stabilizing the second unit? There's a lot of things that go into it. We will approach it that way."

MLB union says 2-second cut to pitch clock too soon for some pitchers

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz. (AP)—Major League Baseball's move to slice two seconds off the pitch clock with runners on base is too much, too soon, according to players' association head Tony Clark.

The clock is shortening to 18 seconds from 20 with men on base and will stay at 15 seconds with no one on.

"That's a conversation that should have warranted a much longer dialogue than what we had," Clark said Saturday. "We voiced those concerns, players voiced those concerns, and yet, the push through of the change to the pitch clock still happened."

MLB introduced a new rules package last season—including a pitch clock and bigger bases—that cut average game times by 24 minutes to 2 hours, 40 minutes, the quickest games have been played since 1984. The clock, adopted over the objection of player representatives on the competition committee, was considered a huge success and the sport drew more than 70 million fans to ballparks for the first time since 2017.

"We just had the biggest adjustment this league has ever seen in regards to length of game and how the game was affected, by including a clock," Clark said. "Rather than give us another year to adjust and adapt to it, why are we adjusting again, and what are the ramifications going to be?"

AP

New York Yankees starting pitcher Gerrit Cole throws during a baseball spring training workout Wednesday, Feb. 21, 2024, in Tampa, Fla.

Clark's main concern is that pitchers have less time between pitches to recover, particularly when maximum effort and pitch velocity are so important.

"When fatigue happens, you're more susceptible to injury," Clark said. "We're seeing a lot of injuries and we're seeing them in a way that simply can't remove the question of whether or not shortening recovery time is in anyone's best interest."

FREE AGENT MARKET

There are several high-profile free agents who remain on the market, including two-time Cy Young winner Blake Snell, former MVP Cody Bellinger, six-time All-Star J.D. Martinez and four-time Gold Glove third baseman Matt Chapman.

"If teams want to improve, there are a lot of players across the spectrum who can help teams finish as the last team," Clark said.

MLB Commissioner Rob Manfred said this month the league would prefer a free-agent signing period, ideally in December, that ended with a deadline. An MLB proposal in 2019 was dismissed by the union.

Clark, who from 1995 to 2009, prefers the flexibility of the current rules, which place no deadlines on reaching free-agent deals.

"A deadline, in all likelihood, is going to do more damage to players in those conversations than the other way around," Clark said.

A'S SITUATION

The Oakland Athletics still don't know where they're playing after the 2024 season as the franchise prepares for a planned move to Las Vegas.

The A's have met with Oakland city officials about extending the club's lease beyond 2024, but nothing is certain. A new ballpark in Las Vegas is not expected to be ready until 2028.

Options included staying at the Coliseum, or playing in another city, like Sacramento of Salt Lake City.

"I've been pretty consistent in that it needed to happen yesterday," Clark said. "The players on those teams, the fans in that market, and potentially in other markets, the longer this conversation goes on, the more detrimental in the grand scheme of things.

"Whether it's Sacramento, whether it's Salt Lake, whether it's somewhere else, decisions need to be made sooner rather than later."

2028 OLYMPICS

Clark said many MLB players are excited about the prospect of playing in the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics, but that the "devil is in the proverbial details" when it comes to making it happen.

Several stars—including Bryce Harper—have expressed a desire to play in Los Angeles.

"There's a lot of dialogue there," Clark said. "We haven't received anything formally. We've had conversations with some folks. But the players that we've heard from—at least as of right now—are intrigued by the idea."

DODGERS

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He stepped up to the plate and delivered a clutch two-RBI triple that cleared the bases to make it 13-10.

The Dodgers' dugout and their fans on the bleachers exploded into cheers as they needed those runs—it wasn't over yet because the Pirates still had a chance to rally at the top of the seventh inning. Manahane went on to score off Ed Manibusan and the Dodgers had a 14-10 lead.

With no time to spare, the Pirates then hacked away at Dodgers pitcher Jeff Cruz with a leadoff single by Mark Toves. Toves scored and inched closer to the Dodgers, 11-14, then another run scored later by Pete Sablan to make it 12-14.

If the pressure wasn't on before, it was on now as Cruz needed to close out the game while they still had a small margin to win it. The Pirates didn't give up and continued to swing at pitches but resulted in much needed strikeouts for the Dodgers.

Cruz was then in a bases-loaded jam but went on to register the third out via a fielder's choice—clinching Game 2 and forcing a winner-take-all Game 3 tonight.

Dodgers coach/manager/player David Attao was ecstatic after the game and said that "it was a well-fought battle between the two best teams in the league. I told you guys we're coming, and we came, so we want to keep going."

As for handing the Pirates their first loss all season and extending their championship run by one more game, Attao said, "We respect the Pirates obviously because they went undefeated in the regular season. But someone has to lose sometime and we're just trying our best to get to the next level. We always thank the Lord above and our family, friends, and sponsors…"

The mindset heading into Game 3? Attao said, "We're going out on Wednesday and play it one ball at a time—one inning at a time. Nothing special—we're just going to play hard."

NMIFA

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women's, and interscholastic; handles communications of NMIFA with the East Asian Football Federation and the Asian Football Confederation, and other local and international stakeholders.

He said that he was surprised that he was nominated and selected, but is grateful for the recognition. "I love sports and I consider working for a sports organization as a privilege. Managing a football organization is equally challenging and exciting and it's really nice to be a part of the team that built this very nice training facility on Saipan where we all witnessed the growth and popularity of the sport. I think the sport of football has contributed in a lot of positive ways to the community and it's fulfilling to feel that I have been a part of the organization responsible for developing the sport locally. I am also happy for all the players who were able to travel and experience being in different countries because of football."

He then said, "If I were a good administrator, it's because I have a very supportive group of officials and staff members within NMIFA. Our [executive committee] members are always working as a team and have always contributed a lot of their time in planning the growth and development of the sport. We have dedicated coaches who provide year-round training for the national teams and at the same time also help organize the leagues for men, women, youth, and even the schools. We treated each other almost like family so managing the team is not a difficult task."

LEIGH GASES

The NMI National Men's/Women's U23 National Football Team poses for a group photo as the team was announced the 2023 Team of the Year during the 2023 NMSA Sports Award Banquet last Wednesday night at the Crowne Plaza Resort Saipan.

Zapanta then thanked NMIFA president Jerry Tan for the opportunity to work for the NMIFA, and his wife and sons.

As for the NMI U23 National Football Team that was named the 2023 Team of the Year, Zapanta said he is very proud of them. "Most of these young players came from our youth grassroots program so their victory over Guam just validated the progress of our grassroots program. More than that, it proved that the year-round coaching, training, and hard work of our players had elevated the level of play so we are now very competitive against Guam and some other countries as well."

With Mita's award, Zapanta said it is "verycwell deserved." He said he worked alongside him and attests how "hardworking and dedicated he is for developing football in the NMI."

"We will truly miss coach Mita, not only for his hard work, but because he was able to adjust to the local culture and gain the respect of NMIFA stakeholders," ended Zapanta.

LEIGH GASES

Former NMIFA head coach/technical administrator, Michiteru Mita speaks in a video message from Myanmar after he was announced the 2023 Coach of the Year during the 2023 NMSA Sports Award Banquet last Wednesday night at the Crowne Plaza Resort Saipan.

GIMED

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to compete, I felt excited. I was too eager to lift that my coach told me to 'sit down and relax," he said.

As for his new PR's, Gimed said he's happy to have hit both lifts because he attempted those in training and failed. "I'm happy to hit both lifts and end my competition with both PR's. I'm also happy that I made all of my lifts 6/6. It just worked out well for me," said the 13-year-old.

The Francisco M. Sablan Middle School student said he's not sure what's in store for him in terms of other competitions. However, his training is ongoing as he trained the day after his competition.

He then thanked the CNMI Weightlifting Federation for letting him represent the CNMI. "I want to thank GetFit for getting me started in this sport, if it weren't for you I would not be doing this sport," he added.

He also thanked his coach Angel San Nicolas, fellow lifter Leowell Cristobal, and his teammates for pushing him in training; as well as his mom for supporting him and allowing him to travel off island; and his teachers and classmates for cheering him on during his competition.

Gimed last won gold in the Philippine National Weightlifting Championship held in the central Philippine city of Bacolod last July. Recently, he was nominated for the 2023 Male Student-Athlete of the Year award for his dominant performance with the barbell.

The CNMI Weightlifting Federation sent a six-person team—two women and four men—that competed in six weight categories and three age groups. Annie Gail Manuel and Emmanuel Aquino competed in their first off island competitions. Antonette Labausa and Leowell Cristoball also won a bronze medal each, with results/details of their competition to be posted in the next issues of *Saipan Tribune.*

John Davis, team coach and president of the CNMI Weightlifting Federation, said that he is very happy with and proud of the continuing accomplishments of NMI weightlifters.

Short-handed Heat beat Kings, 121-110, for 4th straight win.

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NMIFA sweeps Coach, Administrator, Team of the Year

LEIGH GASES
NMIFA general secretary Ross Zapanta accepts his 2023 Administrator of the Year award during the 2023 NMSA Sports Award Banquet last Wednesday night at the Crowne Plaza Resort Saipan.

By LEIGH GASES
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REPORTER

It was a clean sweep of three awards for the NMI Football Association and the sport of soccer as Michiteru Mita, the NMIFA's former head coach/technical director was hailed as the 2023 Coach of the Year, while general secretary Ross Zapanta claimed the 2023 Administrator of the Year award, and the NMI U23 National Football Team was named the 2023 Team of the Year.

All three were awarded during the 2023 NMSA Sports Award Banquet last Wednesday night at the Crowne Plaza Resort Saipan.

Mita served as technical director of the NMI Football Association for nearly seven years—the longest by any TD in the NMI. Before leaving the NMI last January, he drafted a five-year Youth Development that would help ensure the continuity and development of the youth program on the islands

In 2023, Mita coached the NMI Men's National Football Team to its first participation in the Pacific Games. He also coached the national team to its first-ever Pacific Games victory, piloting the NMI to a 4-0 win over American Samoa. He also coached the NMI U23 Men's National Team that defeated Guam in the Marianas Cup. It was the first time that the NMI won in the men's division of the Marianas Cup since the event's inception in 2007.

Mita, who is now a coach in Myanmar, sent a video message during the banquet and thanked NMIFA. He said, "This award was given not only to me, but also to the entire soccer coaches. Thank you very much for your hard work and dedication, and support to the players and the community."

Mita added, "I wish you all the best and to have continued success—not only soccer in the NMI, but also all the sports in the NMI. I hope to see you soon."

As for Zapanta, he has been serving as the general secretary of NMIFA for more than a decade. He oversees the implementation of NMIFA's various programs—youth, men's,

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Gimed snatches silver in 2024 Oceania Weightlifting Championships

By LEIGH GASES
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REPORTER

Student-athlete Aiden Gimed won silver in the 2024 Oceania Senior, Junior, and Youth Championships that was held in Auckland, New Zealand from Feb. 17 to 25.

Not only did he snatch up the silver in the Youth 81-kg category, he set personal bests with a 95-kg snatch and a 115-kg clean & jerk for a total weight lifted of 210 kg. After his stellar performance, he was sought for autographs by local children at the event.

NMIFA
The NMI's Aiden Gimed, right, won silver in the Youth 81-kg category during the 2024 Oceania Senior, Junior, and Youth Championships that was held in Auckland, New Zealand from Feb. 17 to 25. Gold went to Samoa's Tovio Ah Chong and bronze went to Guam's Malachi Lujan.

Gold went to Samoa's Tovio Ah Chong with a 272-kg total, and bronze went to Guam's Malachi Lujan who lifted a total of 155 kg.

The experience on the big stage this time around was "less intense" for Gimed because he said it felt similar when he competed in Guam and the Philippines. "Those times I was nervous, but for this competition I was excited and focused on performing up to my best," said Gimed.

During the competition, Gimed said he stayed focused throughout. "Once it was time

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Dodgers sink Pirates, 14-12

By LEIGH GASES
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REPORTER

The Dodgers stayed afloat in the 2023 Tan Holdings-SBL Masters League championship series after they sunk the once unsinkable Pirates' undefeated bid for the championship last Monday night at the Francisco "Tan Ko" Palacios Baseball Field.

In a do-or-die continuation of Game 2, the Dodgers needed to tie up the series after the Pirates took Game 1 last week. Game 2 was rained out last Wednesday and the Dodgers came back onto the diamond with renewed vigor with a close 14-12 win.

The Dodgers were up, 7-6, heading into the continuation of the game—and the Pirates were raring to take them down. However, even after the Pirates scored three to put them up, 10-9, the Dodgers' Mark Villagomez hit a two-run home run that took the lead by one once again, 11-10, in the sixth inning.

Two more Dodgers batters got on base—Glen Camacho and Robert Bansil—and they were in perfect scoring position to add insurance runs.

It was like something from the baseball movie *Moneyball*, when pinch hitter of the Oakland Athletics' Scott Hatteberg stepped up to the plate and delivered the pinch-hit, walk-off homer that clinched their 20th straight win—Dodgers pinch hitter Mel Manahane had a similar moment.

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DAPHNE CRUZAT
The Dodgers players pose for a group photo after they won Game 2, 14-12, over the Pirates in the 2023 Tan Holdings-SBL Masters League championship series last Monday at the Francisco "Tan Ko" Palacios Baseball Field.